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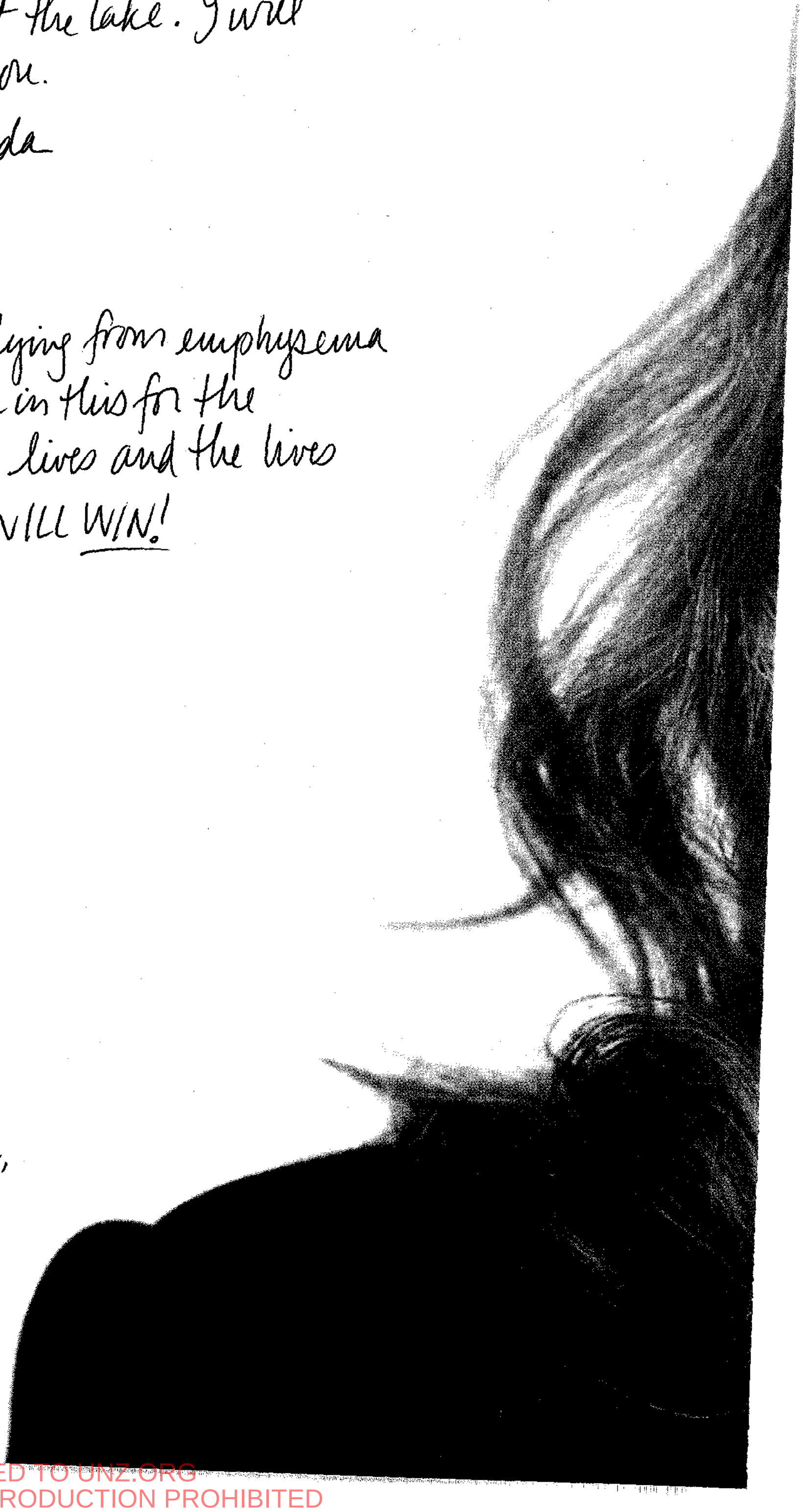

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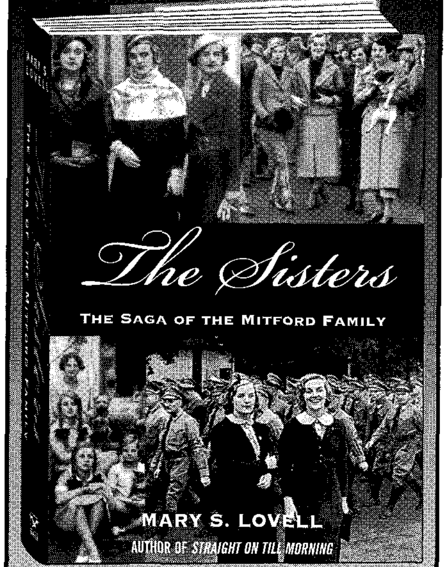
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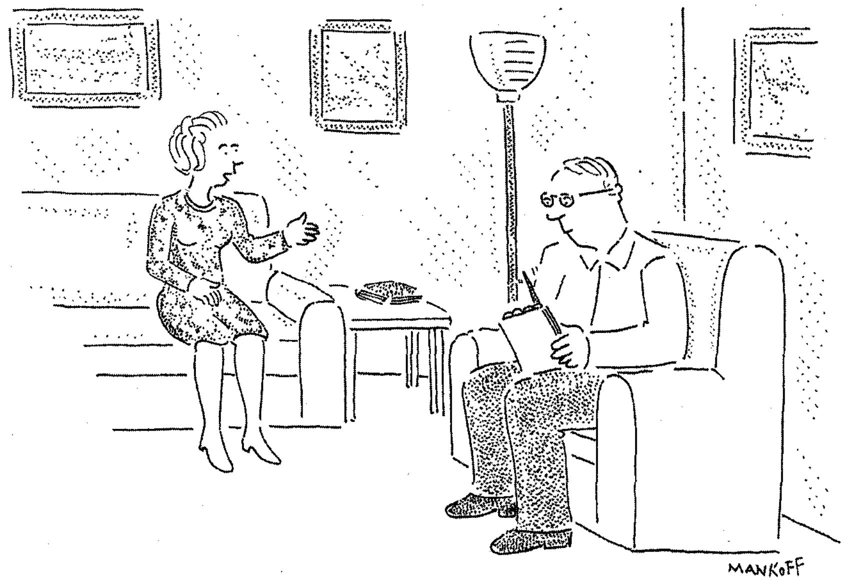
Christoph Niemann (Cover) is an illustrator and designer whose work appears regularly in the magazine. ♦



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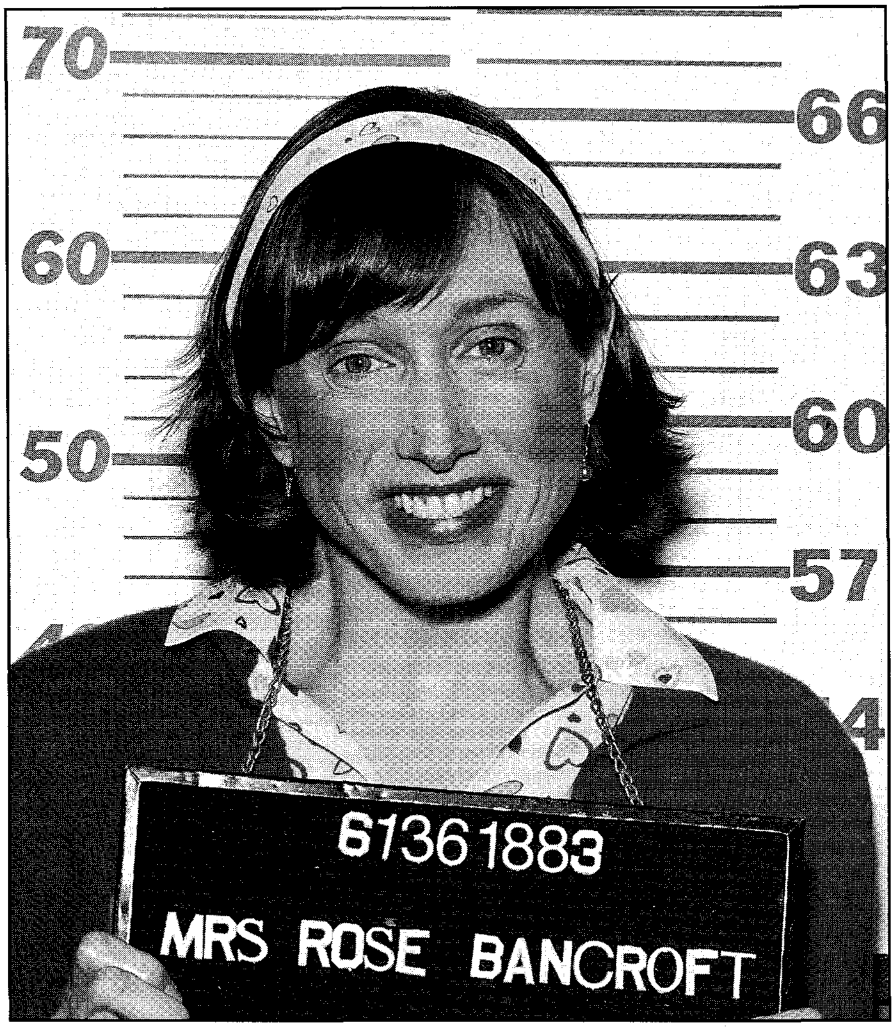

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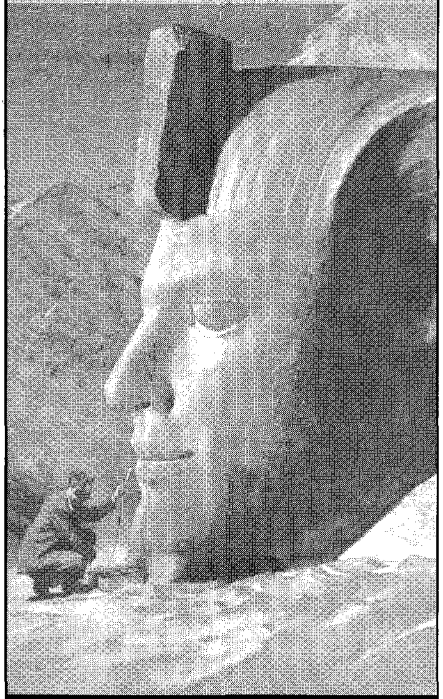

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ABANDONING THE SOUTH

Nicholas Lemann, in his analogy between the South after the Civil War and the West Bank today, misses certain important aspects of America's experience (The Talk of the Town, April 22nd & 29th). When Reconstruction collapsed, in part because of the white terrorism Lemann cites, the result was not a "two-state solution" but that one ever less representative political party was able to dominate the South and extend its influence into national politics. Lemann suggests that, once the irritant of occupying Union troops was gone, whites turned their attention to economic progress rather than to revenge—and emerged, eighty years later, far more receptive to the civil-rights movement. But this doesn't capture the upheaval of those decades: continued black demands for a more just society; the white-supremacist violence against blacks that such demands engendered; and the role of Cold War concerns for the United States' image in forcing the federal government to intervene. A two-state solution for Israelis and Palestinians will have to be built on realistic assessments of their situation; a mythic version of ours won't help.
Stephen Kantrowitz
Associate Professor of History
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wis.

Lemann writes that the occupation of the South during Reconstruction had two rationales: national security and guaranteeing the citizenship rights of former slaves. But, before Lincoln's death, his primary objective had been the peaceful reunification of the two warring (and culturally disparate) sides. Lincoln's interest was personal as well as political; his in-laws were mostly Confederate, and the schism in his family had created almost unendurable pain. To the same end, General Grant at Appomattox was humane to a fault toward Confederate soldiers. It was the wisdom of Lincoln and Grant and the grace and flexibility in defeat of General Lee that enabled the enemy states to begin to heal.
Deborah Marinelli
Kinderhook, N.Y.

PROKOFIEV THE HEDGEHOG

Charles Michener recounts that Mstislav Rostropovich, in describing Prokofiev, called the composer a *yozhik;* not knowing the English word, he drew a picture of a "small round animal with lots of spiky quills" which Michener identified as a porcupine (The Talk of the Town, April 22nd & 29th). As it happens, Rostropovich drew not a porcupine (which is neither cute nor cuddly) but a European hedgehog (which is). Hedgehogs are common characters in the Russian countryside as well as in folklore, where they are wise, patient, and kind. It's a point of confusion for Russians who come here and try to find their favorite animal among the fauna of North America.
Yevgeny Simkin
Brooklyn, N.Y.

SHIRTS AND WRITERS

Nick McDonell, the "prep-school novelist," may well have pondered whether taking his shirt off for *Details* would have "destroyed his credibility," as he told the Talk of the Town (May 20th). But if he did, it was on his own initiative; nobody from *Details* ever asked him to disrobe. Naturally, in the course of putting out a magazine that covers the activities of intelligent young men, we do ask many novelists to take off their shirts, but McDonell was not one of them. We don't know much about his writing, but he seems to have an extremely productive imagination.
Dan Peres
Editor, Details
New York City

•

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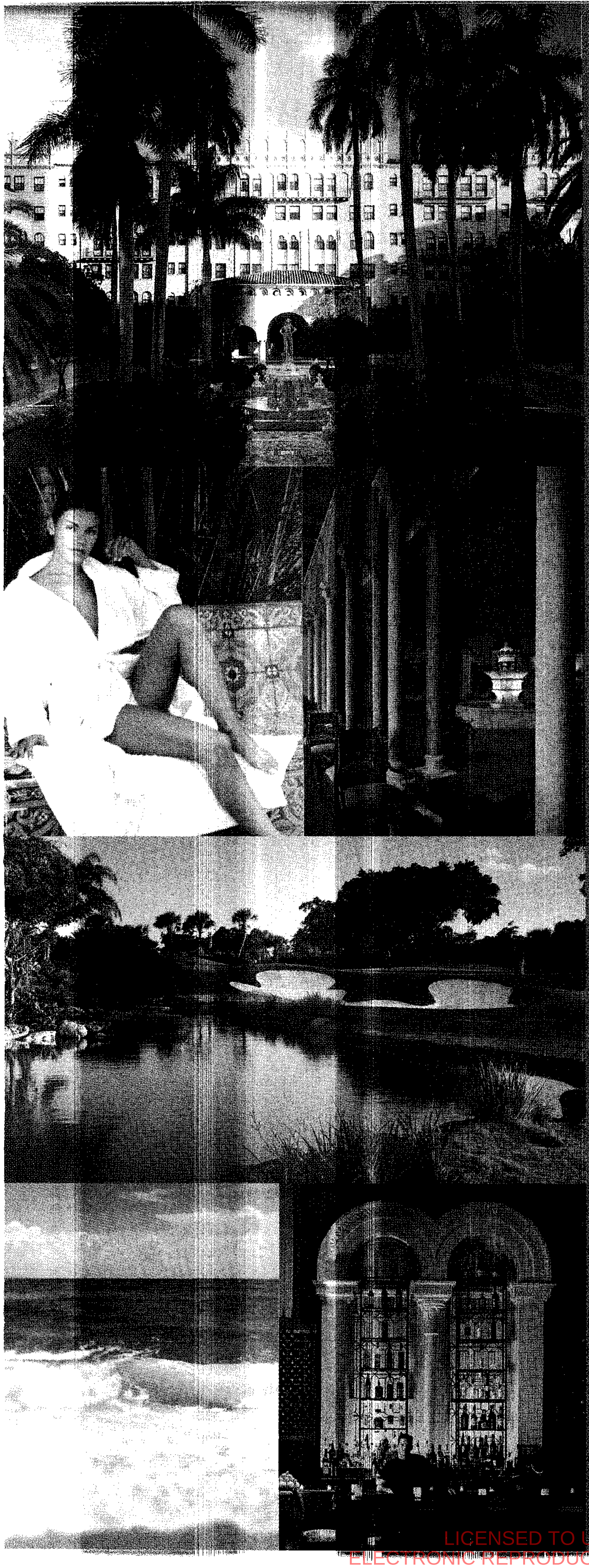

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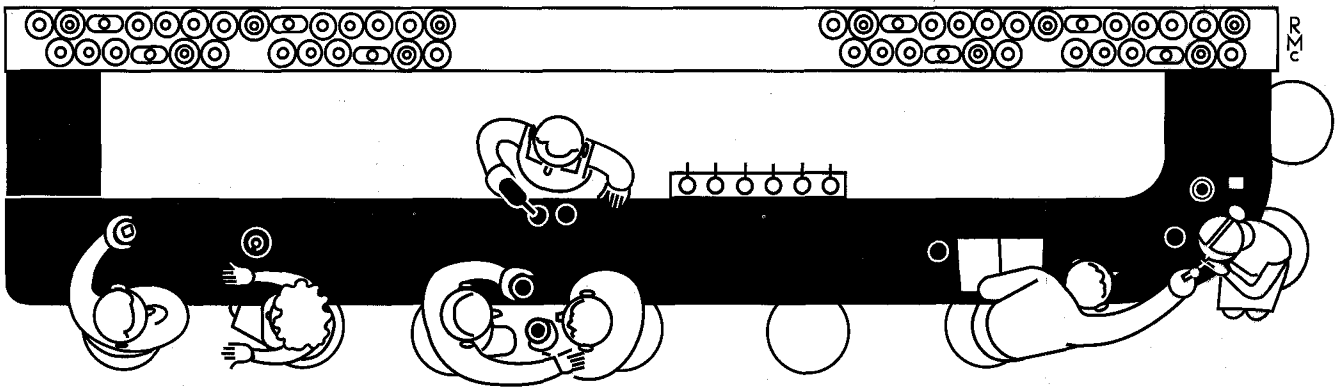

THE THEATRE
OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

BOYS AND GIRLS
A gay man moves in with two lesbian friends to offer their son a male role model, in a new play by Tom Donaghy. Gerald Gutierrez is the director. In previews through May 26. Opens May 28 at 7. (The Duke, 229 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

JOE AND BETTY
Murray Mednick's latest play, set in the Catskills in 1951, about the deterioration of a struggling Jewish couple's marriage. John Diehl and Annabelle Gurwitch star. Previews begin May 28. (Jose Quintero, 534 W. 42nd St. 244-7529.)

ROOM
Classic Stage Company wraps up the season with a solo performance piece based on the writings of Virginia Woolf, created by the SITI Company and directed by Anne Bogart. Preview on May 22. Opens May 23 at 7. (136 E. 13th St. 677-4210, ext. 2.)

SELF-DEFENSE; OR, DEATH OF SOME SALESMEN
Carson Kreitzer's drama is based on the true story of a Florida prostitute and serial killer who claims she murdered in self-defense. Previews begin May 25. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Spring St. 647-0202.)

THIS THING OF DARKNESS
The Atlantic Theatre Company wraps up the season with a drama written by Craig Lucas and David Schulner. In previews. (336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

THE ACTING COMPANY
Presenting "Pudd'nhead Wilson," an adaptation of Twain's novel. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200. Closes May 25.)

THE CARPETBAGGER'S CHILDREN
Jean Stapleton, Hallie Foote, and Roberta Maxwell portray three daughters of a Union soldier, in Horton Foote's latest play. Michael Wilson is the director. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/10/01.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

THE CRUCIBLE
A masterly revival by Richard Eyre of Arthur Miller's drama about the Salem witch-hunt of 1692, an allegory for the blacklisting delirium of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Abigail Williams (the edgy, excellent Angela Bettis), an orphaned seventeen-year-old Puritan, has been seen dancing in the woods trying to cast a spell over the wife (the expert Laura Linney) of her thirty-five-year-old lover and former employer, John Proctor (Liam Neeson, who is a force of nature). Miller demonstrates the hysteric turning herself into an event in order to preserve a sense of goodness and to project her dark, violent, repressed feelings onto others. (3/18/02) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

ELAINE STRITCH AT LIBERTY
In her extraordinary one-woman show (co-created with *The New Yorker's* theatre critic John Lahr), Stritchie, as Noël Coward called her, once and for all confirms her status as a living legend. As she sings songs and tells tales about the ups and downs of her long life in the theatre, she ends up capturing more than a single lifetime; her show is the synthesis of so much that is rich and rewarding and heartbreaking about life on the stage. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. Closes May 26.)

THE ELEPHANT MAN
Thanks to the 1980 David Lynch movie, just about everyone is familiar with the story of Victorian London's John Merrick, the Elephant Man, whose grotesque deformity took him from a cruel life in freak shows to a less cruel life among the medical community and the curious upper crust. Bernard Pomerance's 1979 play came first; today it seems a bit didactic, but it is still very moving, and the issues that it raises—about faith, colonialism, charity, sexuality—are just as thought provoking. Billy Crudup does a wonderful job as Merrick, a role played without the aid of theatrical prosthetics, and so does Rupert Graves as Frederick Treves, the surgeon who takes him in. Sean Mathias is the director. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE
The second series in this year's six-week marathon of one-acts begins May 22 at 7:30 with plays by Bill Bozzone, Roger Heddon, Horton Foote, and Dan O'Brien. Series B runs through June 2. The marathon continues through June 16. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-4982.)

A FEW STOUT INDIVIDUALS
John Guare's new dark comedy is full of his typical wit and intelligence, but it's also unfocussed and preachy. It uses Ulysses S. Grant's plight at the end of his life—broke, dying of cancer, and addicted to painkillers, he's trying to finish his memoirs so he can leave his family some money—as madcap fodder for examining the mercurial nature of the American memory. Most of the time, Grant can't recall a thing, and the play is built around the repeated (and often manipulative) encouragement he gets from his doting but oblivious wife and feckless kids; his secretary and eventual biographer, Adam Badeau; Mr. Mark Twain (who eventually published Grant's two-volume book); and the Emperor and Empress of Japan, among others. Under the direction of Michael Greif, the performances are excellent—but did somebody forget to hire a dramaturge? (Signature, 555 W. 42nd St. 244-7529.)

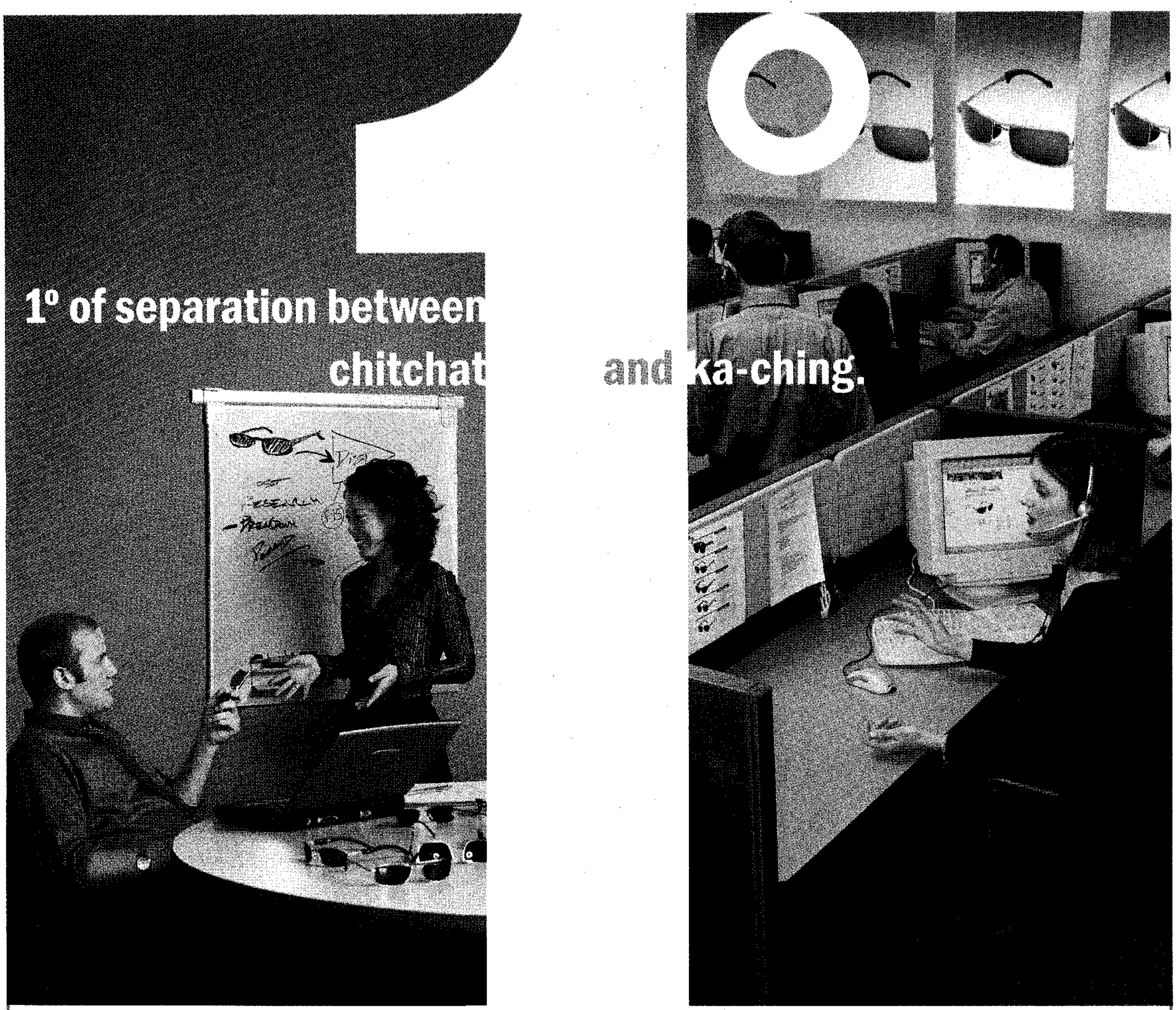
FOOL FOR LOVE
Tim Corcoran's precise, insightful direction is the heart of this revival of Sam Shepard's 1983 play about a misbegotten love. Though there is unfortunately little chemistry between the two leads, the evening's power lies mainly in the monologues, and those are superb. (29th Street Rep, 212 W. 29th St. 206-1515.)

FORTUNE'S FOOL
Turgenev's little-known 1848 play, set at a Russian country estate, stars Alan Bates as a down-on-his-luck gentleman living there and Frank Langella as his wealthy, arrogant neighbor. Just as their characters represent the gamut of the negative qualities of the ruling class, Langella and Bates seem to use up all the acting possibilities in the play as they goad and react to each other; from the moment they first appear on the stage together, it becomes almost unnecessary for anyone else to be present, so completely do they dominate the evening. Directed by Arthur Penn. (4/15/02) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GOAT; OR, WHO IS SYLVIA?
Left to his own devices, without society's rules or the superego's tyrannical eye, homo sapiens would shtup mud. Or so Edward Albee contends in his ninety-minute anecdote about a happily married, successful architect who falls in love with a goat called Sylvia. It takes all of Albee's expertise to tease this joke into an evening; but it allows Mercedes Ruehl some hilarious moments of high dudgeon as she trashes the house and her husband (Bill Pullman) for "cruising livestock." David Esbjornson is the director. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GODFADDA WORKOUT
A one-man show written and performed by Seth Isler. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

THE GRADUATE
This pointless production, starring Kathleen Turner as Mrs. Robinson, is endless and full of dead air. There are exactly two pleasures here: Victor Slezak, as Mr. Robinson, and Murphy Guyer, as Benjamin's father; they depict beautifully the anger and anxiety that underlie their postwar poolside bonhomie. Terry Johnson, who directed, adapted the novel and the screenplay, and we'll never understand why. (4/15/02) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)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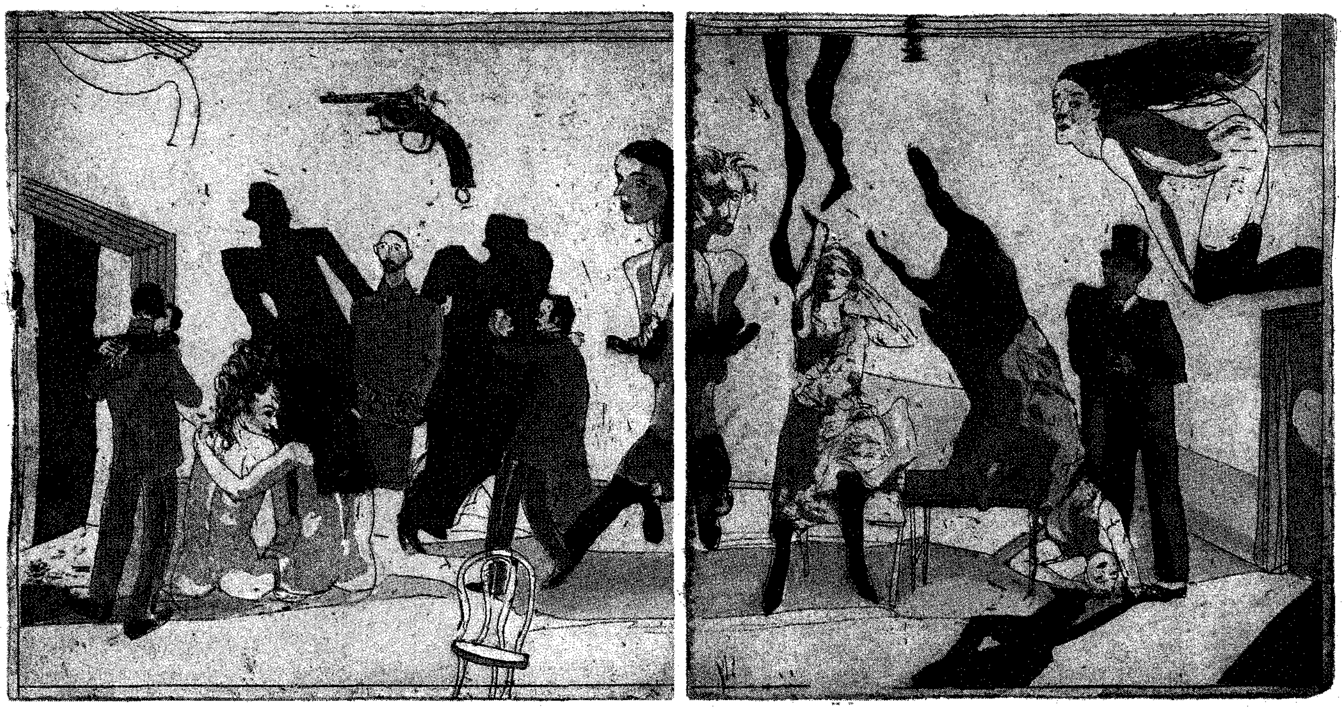


"Vienna: Lusthaus (Revisited)," by Martha Clarke, Charles L. Mee, and Richard Peaslee, at New York Theatre Workshop.

ROBERT ANDREW PARKER

THE GUYS
A dialogue between a fire captain named Nick, who lost eight of his men on September 11th, and Joan, an editor who helps him prepare their eulogies, written by Anne Nelson, a journalist, and directed by Jim Simpson, the Flea Theatre's artistic director. It's an artful and moving re-creation of the relationships New Yorkers formed as a result of that day—of the way that people "jumped tracks" and suddenly saw into each other's lives. (Nelson herself assisted a fire captain in writing some eulogies, and the play grew out of that experience.) It's an admirable tribute to the men who died and an articulate rendering of the way that one woman dealt with her "beautiful, gleaming, wounded city." (The Flea, 41 White St. 226-2407.)

HOUSE AND GARDEN
A pair of conjoined plays, performed simultaneously on two stages, by Alan Ayckbourn. John Tillinger is the director. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

. . . IN THE ABSENCE OF SPRING . . .
Joe Calarco's drama traces twenty-four hours in the lives of a group of plane-crash survivors. (McGinn/Cazale, Broadway at 76th St. 246-4422. Closes May 26.)

INTO THE WOODS
Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's 1987 fairy-tale-derived musical weaves together the stories of Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Rapunzel. But it isn't so much a rethinking of fairy tales as it is a parable about growing up and finding your place in the community, and about learning to live with uncertainty and ambivalence. In the first act, we see wishes coming true, and in the second we see the consequences of those wishes. The archetypal material is treated with suitable directness and simplicity, and yet the show lacks none of the intelligence or emotional honesty we expect from Sondheim. The generally fine cast includes Vanessa Williams, who is vivid and sympathetic as the ghastly-looking witch who sets the plot in motion; the lovely-voiced Laura Benanti, as Cinderella; and John McMartin, as the narrator. Mr. Lapine is the director. (5/13/02) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

JIMMY CARTER WAS A DEMOCRAT
Rinne Groff's play about politics, sex, and air-traffic control, set during the early nineteen-eighties. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Closes May 29.)

THE LAST SUPPER
The playwright Ed Schmidt, who got himself ordained as a minister in the Universal Life Church and installed pews in the kitchen of his own home, cooks and serves dinner for an audience of twelve ("honest-to-God dinner theatre") while subjecting them to a ranting meditation on what really went down at the Last Supper. Given Schmidt's doubts about his religion (he's Catholic) and his chosen profession ("sitting in front of a computer screen all day, talking in funny voices"), his show, which brings to mind both Julia Child and Spalding Gray, is a surprisingly spirited attempt at making the Host palatable to contemporary audiences. (410 16th St., Brooklyn. 718-499-7758.)

LONG ISLAND SOUND
A recently discovered play by Noël Coward, about an Englishman's visit to the North Shore. (314 W. 54th St. 645-8228.)

THE MAN WHO HAD ALL THE LUCK
In this beautifully cast production of Arthur Miller's 1944 play, the terrific actors, under the direction of Scott Ellis, illuminate the drama as fully as it is possible to do. A young auto mechanic named David Beeves (Chris O'Donnell) can't accept his good fortune in life, because he doesn't think he's done anything to deserve it. Living rebukes are all around him: his older brother, Amos (Ryan Shively), a talented baseball player, can't get a break; a better mechanic (the very touching Sam Robards) comes to town to set up shop and ends up working for David; a neighbor (Dan Moran) has been left wheelchair-bound by a freak accident. The play asks whether what happens to us is the result of character or luck, and whether character itself is a matter of luck, but it doesn't try to answer the question, which is why, after fifty-eight years, the work still has plenty of life in it. (5/13/02) (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 719-1300.)

METAMORPHOSES
Ovid's tales, loosely adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman, who has had the ingenious idea of staging the caprice of the gods in a swimming pool. The production is fun and full of wonder, but it illustrates rather than dramatizes psychic struggle. The show's gimmick, the pool, turns out to be its metaphor—refreshing and shallow. (3/18/02) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

MR. GOLDWYN
As an exercise in hagiography, this play about the Hollywood mogul and legendary maestro of the malaprop makes A&E's "Biography" look edgy. It has no dramatic trajectory, no psychological insight, and no second act. (3/25/02) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. Closes June 9.)

MORNING'S AT SEVEN
The question all of the characters in this revival of Paul Osborne's 1939 back-porch drama ask one way or another is: What am I going to do with my life? This is commercial Broadway fare, so everybody gets their answer within two hours. It's bland stuff, sort of Chekhov light, but the pleasing all-star cast (Elizabeth Franz, Julie Hagerty, Buck Henry, Piper Laurie, Christopher Lloyd, William Biff McGuire, Estelle Parsons, Frances Sternhagen, and Stephen Tobolowsky) puts this rickety workhorse through its paces. Directed by Daniel Sullivan. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE ODYSSEY
Derek Walcott's adaptation of Homer's epic poem, in a Willow Cabin Theatre Company production. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200. Closes June 2.)

OKLAHOMA!
There are stupendous pleasures in the Royal National Theatre's award-winning version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 American classic. Many of them are due to the high-spirited, humorous choreography of Susan Stroman, and to Anthony Ward's picturesque set, which immediately submerges us in a gorgeous world of folk innocence. But technique, which can make a show work, is not enough to make it wonderful. (4/1/02) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

ONE SHOT, ONE KILL
Richard Vetere's play is set at the U.S. Marine base in Quantico, Virginia. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

PIGTOWN
A charming, vivacious production of a far less successful script about life in Limerick in the twentieth century. Although the playwright, Mike Finn, has a good ear for the telling turn of phrase, his characters are stereotypes, his show has little momentum, and the only thing we learn about the history of Limerick is that pork butchering was once a significant industry. Nonetheless, under Charlotte Moore's brilliant direction, the splendid cast makes the most of it; watching Limerick residents learn to swim based on instructions read over the radio is incredibly funny, and there are more than enough similarly amusing scenes. (Irish Rep, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737. Closes June 9.)

PRIVATE LIVES
In Noël Coward's comedy of bad manners, two wonderful actors, Alan Rickman and Lindsay Duncan, play the embattled exes Elyot and Amanda—dandies of detachment who jilt their new spouses and run away together to a Parisian love nest. They have a field day with Coward's nuanced silences, with all the verbal tics and physical revelations of repressed feeling. Howard Davies's radical notion is to play Elyot and Amanda's physical passion for real, rather than opting for the standard notional sexual allure. This allows him to capitalize on the wonderful chemistry between Rickman and Duncan, but it also throws the comedy weirdly off kilter. (5/6/02) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

QED
Peter Parnell's play, starring Alan Alda as the physicist Richard Feynman, buzzes with life. Set in 1986, it takes us through an afternoon and evening in Feynman's office at Caltech, where he talks about such subjects as photons, drumming, the Manhattan Project, cancer, and "South Pacific." Alda's performance is one of utter charm. Sundays and Mondays only. (11/26/01) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes June 10.)

RICKY JAY: ON THE STEM
The master magician's tribute to the flimflammery and weird entertainments that have cropped up over the years along the length of Broadway, "the stem that winds the watch" of New York City. Working six hundred and forty-two steps (he counted them) from the flea museum that used to be in Times Square, Jay re-creates such flea feats as Ophelia's death and Samson's destruction of the Temple of the Philistines. There are also card tricks that amaze and astonish, all performed with a charming smile by the president of the international brotherhood of snake-oil salesmen. Prepare to be happily hornswoggled. (Note: Jay has decreed that that no one under sixteen will be admitted to his show.) Directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 246-4422.)

THE SANDMAN
Target Margin Theatre's new opera starts with a rather large man singing something in German. A stagehand steps forward to translate, then it all starts over again, in English. Having neatly fulfilled and then confounded one's expectations, the show goes on in the company's smart, knowing way. It offers a moving version of E. T. A. Hoffmann's story about a young man haunted by his father's death. It's also a funny deconstruction of how operas are put together. Under the gifted direction of David Herskovits, the performances and voices are strong. (Connelly Theatre, 220 E. 4th St. 358-3657.)

SMELLING A RAT
The New Group takes on another Mike Leigh play, about a successful exterminator. (Samuel Beckett, 410 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

SURVIVING GRACE
A play by Trish Vradenburg, about a fraught mother-and-daughter relationship. Jack Hofsiss directs. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-7171.)

SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS
At first glance, this new musical, adapted from the excellent Clifford Odets–Ernest Lehman movie (1957) by a high-powered artistic team headed by the director Nicholas Hytner, seems to have got it right. Unfortunately, the wit of John Guare's book is not sustained in Marvin Hamlisch's soft, undistinguished score and Craig Carnelia's flat lyrics. (3/25/02) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE
A 1967 Hollywood version of the Roaring Twenties—which starred Julie Andrews as an ingenue flapper who comes to New York City, finds true love, and helps break up a Chinese-run white-slavery ring—reimagined for the stage in 2002. Just like the movie, it's supposed to be all madcap Jazz Age fizziness, but the harder the cast sings and dances, the flatter the enterprise falls. The colors seem garish rather than gay, the manic energy feels forced at gunpoint, and the only thing you recall about Sutton Foster's Millie after you leave the theatre is her huge white teeth and bouncy black bob. Call it thoroughly boring, shrilly. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG
The Public Theatre's production of Suzan-Lori Parks's play has moved to Broadway, starring Jeffrey Wright and Mos Def. George C. Wolfe is the director. (Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

21 DOG YEARS: DOING TIME@AMAZON.COM
In his solo show, Mike Daisey exposes life at the online giant during its early years. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.)

VIENNA: LUSTHAUS (REVISITED)
In this splendid revival of Martha Clarke's 1986 dance-theatre piece, inspired by the psychosexual steaminess of fin-de-siècle Vienna, a handsome troupe of dancers, sometimes clothed in the style of characters in a Schnitzler play, sometimes unclothed in the style of figures in a Schiele painting, enact various states of alienation and desire in a gauzy atmosphere charged with premonitions of the Second World War. The actors intone Charles L. Mee's cryptic scraps of monologue, taken in part from the notebooks of Freud; the musicians play plangent scraps of music composed by Richard Peaslee. Inexorably, the whole thing gets to you like a beautiful, bad dream. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 239-6200. Closes June 2.)

CLASSICAL NOTES

MESSENGERS
"Der Bote" ("The Messenger"), a June release on ECM from the pianist Alexei Lubimov, is one of a number of tantalizing disks that may mark a return to the art of the miniature, to programs that emphasize the performer's instincts over the cookie-cutter strategies of concert promoters. It strings together a number of short, elegiac pieces by Chopin, Glinka, Debussy, Cage, and others; while none of the works are especially well known, Lubimov's performances are so hauntingly persuasive that each one seems indispensable. The pianist's free, impulsive, jazzlike style—crisp attacks emerging from gentle vapors of pedal—lightens what could have been an overload of nostalgia.

One of the composers on the Lubimov disk gets a fuller treatment on **"Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach: Sonatas & Rondos"** (Deutsche Grammophon), an album from a very different Russian pianist, Mikhail Pletnev. Pletnev is a princely artist in the Rachmaninoff tradition, and his sound—brooding and dark in the lower range, with a brilliant top—has something of the Master's touch. More important, he shares his forebear's cool and analytical approach to the most passionate music, which suits the jutting phrases, crazy forms, and unpredictable harmonic turns of these aggressively emotional compositions. C.P.E., the most talented of J. S. Bach's sons, had the misfortune to compose during a transitional time in music history, but Pletnev's advocacy—like Glenn Gould's for the Goldberg Variations—should give this strange music a wider audience.

The aim of András Schiff's two-disk set, **"In Concert—Robert Schumann"** (ECM), is to offer an embracing view of the composer's early piano music, even if all the works featured here—the "Humoreske," the Sonata in F Minor, and the eight "Novelletten"—are not on the same high level. In the concert hall, the Hungarian pianist's long and absorbing programs can seem like too much of a good thing; combining the rounded sonic elegance of a Rubinstein with the intellectual drive of a Pollini, he can leave an audience feeling overfed. But Schiff's lucid style is an ideal match for Schumann's music, which is as complex and fervid as the composer himself.

—*Russell Platt*

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET
May 22 at 8: "Mozartiana"; the première of "Twilight Courante," choreographed by Stephen Baynes; and "Vienna Waltzes." ♦ May 23 at 8: "Swan Lake," "Hallelujah Junction," "Red Angels," and "I'm Old Fashioned." ♦ May 24 at 8: "Swan Lake," "Viola Alone," and "I'm Old Fashioned." ♦ May 25 at 2: "Bach Concerto V," "Interplay," "Hallelujah Junction," and "Cortège Hongrois." ♦ May 25 at 8: "Swan Lake," "Twilight Courante," and "Jeu de Cartes." ♦ May 26 at 3: "Interplay," "Them Twos," and "Cortège Hongrois." ♦ May 28 at 7:30: "Monumentum Pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Herman Schmerman Pas de Deux," "Them Twos," and "I'm Old Fashioned." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through June 30.)

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE
The latest addition to the company's bounty of emotionally ample, technically precise Latin wizards is the long-limbed Cuban Carlos Acosta, who, at twenty-eight years old, has already been a principal with the Houston and Royal Ballets. The two roles he débuts in this week show off the breadth of his talent. On the one hand, he is the always impeccable prince of "Sleeping Beauty"—"a fairy-tale prince," he says, "so all the lines are elegant. Even when I do something spectacular, I can never lose that configuration of lines"—and on the other he is the faintly phantasmic Oberon in "The Dream," Frederick Ashton's mildly creepy Victorian take on the Shakespeare comedy of errors. Oberon, Acosta says, "is not a normal king, he's a weird creature. I show he's out of this world by how I move my fingers and eyes, and the accents I give the steps." May 22 at 2: "Theme and Variations," "Nutcracker Pas de Deux," "White Swan Pas de Deux," "Rose Adagio," and "Sleeping Beauty, Act III." ♦ May 22 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "Swan Lake, Act II," and "Sleeping Beauty, Act III" (with Acosta and Susan Jaffe). ♦ May 23 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "Black Swan Pas de Deux," "Rose Adagio," and "Sleeping Beauty, Act III." ♦ May 24 at 8 and May 25 at 2: "The Dream" and "Symphony in C." ♦ May 25 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "Walk This Way," and "Sleeping Beauty." ♦ May 27 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "Nutcracker Pas de Deux," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "Rose Adagio," and "Sleeping Beauty, Act III." ♦ May 28 at 8: "The Dream" and "Symphony in C." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through July 6.)

DANCE AFRICA
The twenty-fifth-anniversary production of the African and African-American dance festival features the Charles Moore Dance Theatre, Chuck Davis Dance Company, Forces of Nature Dance Theatre Company, LaRocque Bey School of Dance, Rennie Harris PureMovement, and BAM/Restoration DanceAfrica Ensemble. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100. May 24 at 7:30, May 25 at 2 and 7:30, and May 26 at 3.)

DANCE BRAZIL
The company, under the direction of Jelon Vieira, specializes in capoeira and traditional Afro-Brazilian dance. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 21 at 7:30, May 22-25 at 8, and May 26 at 2 and 7:30.)

"MORPHMANIAC: LIVE REMIX"
The Wally Cardona Quartet performs a work of structured "tracks," which are remixed live according to certain spontaneous signals, including those generated by the movement of members of the audience, who are encouraged to walk around the theatre to view the work. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. May 24-26 at 8:30.)

BALINESE MUSIC THEATRE
Arja prembon, the music theatre of Bali, which involves gamelan music, song, slapstick, and masked dance, is traditionally performed on many occasions, including weddings and tooth fillings. Here it follows a museum lecture. (Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. 327-9276. May 24 at 8. The lecture begins at 6:30.)

PARIS OPERA BALLET
The school of dance in excerpts from "Western Symphony," "Sept Danses Grecques," and "Coppélia," among others. (John Jay College, 899 Tenth Ave., at 59th St. 556-6770. May 23-24 at 7.)

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

PET SHOP BOYS
After a sabbatical in London's West End, where their musical, "Closer to Heaven," had a successful run last year, this veteran synth-pop duo wasted no time in sending shock waves through the dance-music community by adding guitars to their new album, "Release." Although purists may scoff, recruiting the former Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr was a master stroke that widened their appeal beyond the dance-club circuit. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 307-7171. May 21-22 at 9.)

VISION FESTIVAL
Now in its seventh year, this festival valiantly presents a concentrated dose of left-of-mainstream jazz with roots in the free jazz of the sixties, the loft jazz of the seventies, and the downtown music scene of the eighties. Highlights of the four or five sets each evening include the following: the pianist Dave Burrell and the bassist Tyrone Brown on May 23; the bassoonist Karen Borca and her quartet on May 24; a high-energy trio featuring the drummer Milford Graves, the New Orleans saxophonist Kidd Jordan, and the bassist William Parker on May 25; Jordan and Parker along with the Chicago saxophonist Fred Anderson and the drummer Hamid Drake on May 26; and the Don Cherry Memorial Band with Karl Berger and Frank Lowe on May 27. (The Center, 268 Mulberry St., between Houston and Prince Sts.) The festival moves to CBGB's Lounge on May 28 for Other Dimensions in Music, with Roy Campbell, Daniel Carter, William Parker, and Rashid Bakr. (315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. For more information, visit www.visionfestival.org. Through June 9.)

PINK
Eager to distance herself from the saccharine teen pop that first won her fame, this precocious singer is out to show that she's more of a rough-hewn rock chick than a squeaky-clean popstress by focussing on the rawer material from her second album, "M!ssundaztood." It gave the world the inescapable dance hit "Get the Party Started," but it also has contributions by 4 Non Blondes guitarist Linda Perry and the rock icons Richie Sambora and Steven Tyler. Pink may be fashioning herself more as Wendy O. Williams than as Britney Spears these days, but the exposed midriff will still rule the evening. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 307-7171. May 28-29 at 8.)

CLUBS

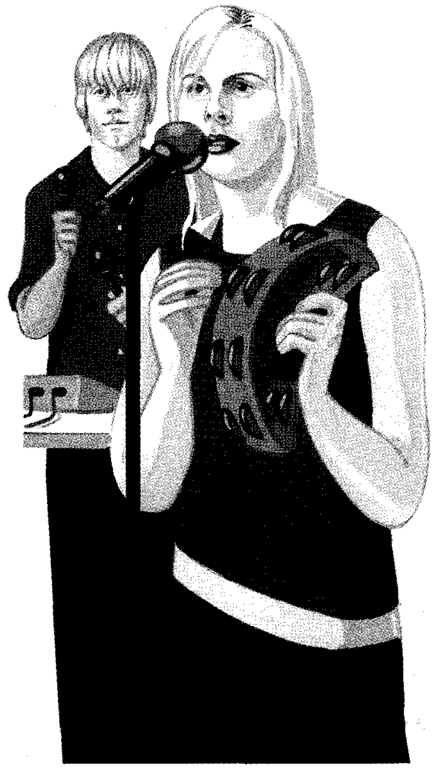
Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—May 22: Milwaukee's **Promise Ring** turns out a style of music called, variously, emo-core, emo-rock, and just plain emo, which is short for "emotion." Their sound is located between the wrath of punk and the sap of pop. It's carefully crafted, earnest, and surprisingly articulate. May 24: Following a lacklustre album poisoned by electronica, 1998's "Redneck Wonderland," the politically charged Australian band **Midnight Oil** returns with songs from its new release, "Capricornia," which may be its most relaxed and breezy effort ever. In concert, however, the Oils, led by their looming bald titan of a lead singer, Peter Garrett, deliver an intense polemic.

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—May 22: **Sebastian Bach,** the shrieking voice behind the late-eighties and early-nineties hair-metal favorites Skid Row, embodied adolescent rebellion and libidinous excess in the days before grunge. More recently Bach drifted from solo project to solo project before eventually landing the unlikely title role in the Broadway production of "Jekyll & Hyde." He returns now to the rock circuit in an attempt to remain credible.

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (539-8777)—May 23-24: With his veteran British New Wave band, Squeeze, on hiatus again, **Glenn Tilbrook** hits the road.

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—May 24: **I Am the World Trade Center** is Dan Geller and Amy Dykes, a couple who for the past few years has been using a laptop and vocals to create eighties-inspired synth pop. Thanks to Geller's earnest sampling and Dykes's charming singing, the music is as appealing as the halcyon days when the words "World Trade Center" conveyed only the notion of an architectural achievement.



Dan Geller and Amy Dykes, of I Am the World Trade Center, at the Knitting Factory.

ALISON SEIFFER

MAKOR
35 W. 67th St. (601-1000)—May 25: **Antibalas** is a fourteen-piece multiracial Afro-beat ensemble from Williamsburg, Brooklyn, which takes its musical and political inspiration from Fela Kuti. Its shows are a thunderous mass of rhythms, horns, and bass.

NORTHSIX
66 N. 6th St., Williamsburg (718-599-5103)—May 24: The streetwise underground hip-hop act **Cannibal Ox.**

TONIC
107 Norfolk St. (358-7503)—May 25: **Big Lazy,** the elegantly gritty instrumental trio led by the guitarist Stephen Ulrich, celebrates the release of its latest album, "New Everything."

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—May 23-25: Three fluid bop guitarists—**Rodney Jones, Jimmy Ponder,** and **William Ash**—turn out for a tribute to Wes Montgomery, the commanding fretman who balanced finesse and funk without breaking a sweat. Dining.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Batten down the hatches—some mighty blowing is a-brewing. If the youngish saxophone commando **James Carter** (here with his organ trio through May 26) reminds you of anyone with his full-force intensity and omnivorous command of his instrument it's **David Murray,** who hit the ground playing in the mid-seventies and has yet to slow down. To have these two tenor titans on the stage at same time is a daunting prospect—can the foundations of the club withstand it?

CARLYLE HOTEL
Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound murals, and, through June 29, the magisterially puckish **Bobby Short.** If playing the same room for more than thirty years is getting Short down, it doesn't show. Singing and playing piano as if his reputation were still on the line and conducting his mini big band with a glee bordering on giddiness, he remains the master of exuberant cabaret.

FEINSTEIN'S AT THE REGENCY
540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4095)—Through May 25: She may have found a secure place in the neo-hipster's pantheon thanks to her role as the straight-faced vocal sidekick to her then-husband Louis Prima during that wild man's fifties heyday, but **Keely Smith** can still sing the stuffing out of a straight ballad as well as swing any tune into the stratosphere. *Starting May 28:* The **John Pizzarelli** trio.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2121)—Through May 26: All the saxophonist **Joe Lovano** needs is a new concept and he's off and running. His latest CD, "Viva Caruso," pays tribute to the great tenor in Lovano's imaginative reworkings of opera warhorses and Italian songs. Lovano's freshly created Street Band will attempt to merge New World improvisation with Neapolitan earthiness. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

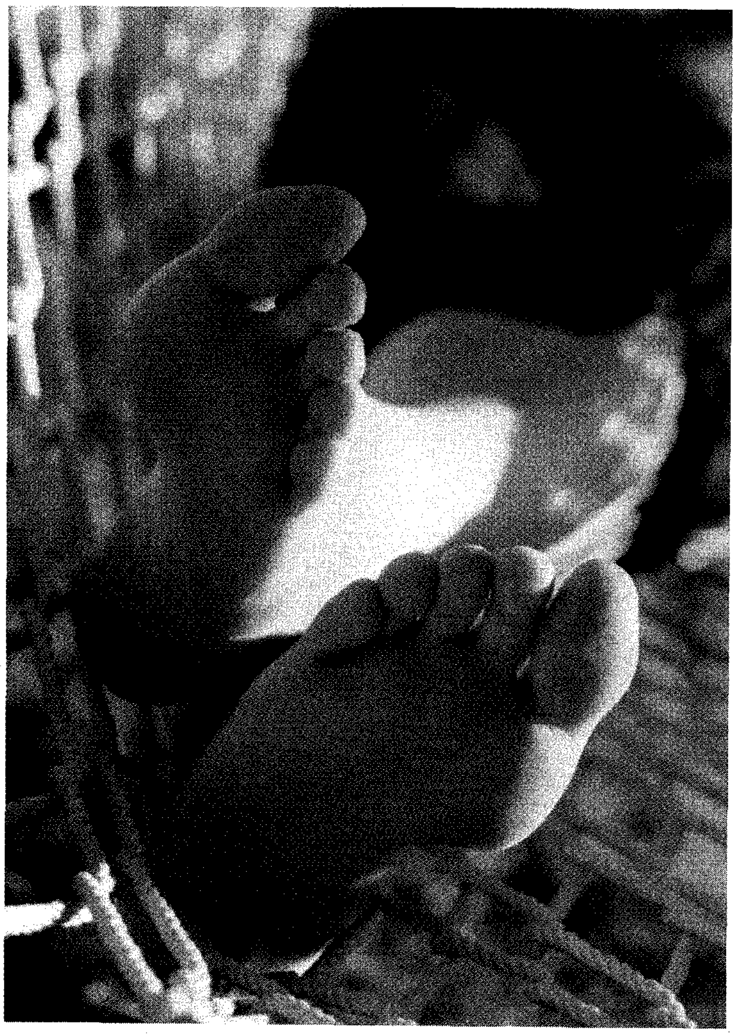
JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—Through May 26: **Split Second,** an R. & B.-fuelled unit featuring the former James Brown trombonist Fred Wesley, the saxophonist Javon Jackson, the guitarist Mark Whitfield, the organist Sam Yahel, and the drummer Lenny White. Dining.

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—May 22-23: **Ralph Alessi** is a trumpeter who has yet to confine himself to musical boundaries, and his name keeps popping up on all manner of projects, from downtown tanglings with Uri Caine to more conventional work with Fred Hersch. His own band, This Against That, draws on such topflight and similarly open-minded players as **Don Byron, Drew Gress, Nasheet Waits,** and **David Gilmore.**

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through May 26: The trumpeter **Dave Douglas's** new album, "The Infinite," calls on Miles Davis for inspiration, but Douglas is far too individual a player and conceptualist to merely ape the legendary hornman; instead he follows Davis's lead in taking on a wide range of material, covering songs by Rufus Wainwright, Macy Gray, and Björk to pay tribute to Davis's inclusive tastes. His compatible quintet features the saxophonist **Chris Potter,** the bassist **James Genus,** the drummer **Clarence Penn,** and **Uri Caine** on keyboards. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ZINC BAR
90 W. Houston St. (477-8337)—Whether blowing tank-force tenor sax with the Mingus Big Band or making lyrical sketches on a Kip Hanrahan recording (to mention just two of his myriad projects), **John Stubblefield** (here May 21-22) can be counted on to make music that is at once intelligent and impassioned.

MONEY MANAGEMENT IS WHAT WE DO.*



*Actually, we're pretty good at lowering blood pressure, too.

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STRONG SUITS *In 1946, George Platt Lynes photographed the ballerina Alexandra Danilova in a satin ball gown with an intricately tucked skirt designed by the master costumer and couturier Adrian, the subject of a new exhibition at the Met's Costume Institute. Born Adrian Adolf Greenburg in 1903, Adrian dressed the headstrong Hollywood divas of the thirties—Garbo, Hepburn, Crawford—in broad-shouldered power suits with aerodynamic lapels and in draped goddess gowns with metallic embroidery. His work incorporated consummate tailoring with a Cubist palette, Constructivist asymmetries, modernist streamlining, and Surrealist prints. Among his film credits: "The Philadelphia Story," "The Women," and (he could do a mean gingham pinafore) "The Wizard of Oz." Adrian opened his own fashion house in 1941. While patriotically skimping on yardage, he enriched American style.—Judith Thurman*

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ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—**"Adrian: American Glamour,"** at the Costume Institute. Through Aug. 18. ♦ The venerable husband-and-wife team of Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen have installed four recent sculptures in the roof garden. The best is a twenty-three-foot-tall garden spade, its jaunty red blade lodged in the patch of grass that sprouts from its pedestal. It looks as if an Olympian landscaper just broke for lunch, and it's perfectly suited to the panoramic view of Central Park. Less satisfying is a baroque white form atop a black rectilinear base. Though based on a Man Ray photograph of Mies van der Rohe's pocket square, it looks more like a crumpled sheet of paper or a gawky rendition of a cloud. Through late fall. ♦ **"Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence."** The aptly titled show features forty-one sumptuous examples of magnificence woven between 1420 and 1560, including "The Unicorn Defends Itself," from the Met's own Cloisters, along with three panels from the ten-part "Acts of the Apostles," designed by Raphael for the Sistine Chapel, and all four sections of the "Alba Passion" cycle, shown together here for the first time since 1877. Through June 19. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—The midtown museum has closed, through 2005. The museum's temporary home in Long Island City opens on June 29. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 5:45; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:15.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—**"Brazil: Body and Soul."** Through May 29. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The 2002 Biennial is a vast, pleasant, rather drab affair, made up of predominantly earnest, unambitious works by a hundred and thirteen artists and collaborative teams on four floors of the museum and in Central Park, where you can find a fifty-foot steel elm tree. The show's New Age-ish curator Lawrence R. Rinder declares that today's young American artists crave "some greater role than mere decoration or ironic critique." His Biennial bunch achieves something decidedly lesser, on the whole, with gimmicky audio and computer works, self-indulgent installations, and a great many unsurprising video projections. ("Vita brevis, video longa," one observer remarked.) Serious painting and sculpture are scarce. Momentary relief arrives in the form of memorable pieces by Vija Celmins, Chan Chao, Stephen Dean, and Lorna Simpson. Through May 26. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM AT PHILIP MORRIS

120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550)—For **"Five by Five,"** the museum invited five young artists to select a contemporary work from its collection and create a piece of their own in response. (Contemporary is defined here as post-1985.) Four of the choices are predictably fashionable—Mike Kelley, Charles Ray, Tom Sachs, and Christopher Wool—which may say as much about the museum's holdings as it does about the artists' apparent myopia. The one exception, an American flag immersed in preservatives by Donald Lipski in 1991, also makes for the most ambitious response, a teetering installation by Rina Banerjee, combining tiny flags, a gold shrine, a big parasol, cocktail umbrellas, feathers, and an electric fan. According to the artist, it's a symbolic representation of Manhattan. Both Lipski and Banerjee conflate the poetic and the political with witty, if less than subtle, results. Through July 5. (Open weekdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 7:30.)

MUSEO DEL BARRIO

Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (831-7272)—**"Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and Twentieth-Century Mexican Art: The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection."** Seven self-portraits by Kahlo form the heart of this show tracing the development of Mexican modernism from the teens to the fifties. The most riveting is "Diego on My Mind," which shows Kahlo's third eye sprouting a picture of the Mexican muralist while tendrils of her hair curl outward; she's both Medusa and a black widow at the center of her web. The show also includes numerous portraits of art patrons Jacques and Natasha Gelman, whose collection is the basis for the exhibition. They range from a hackneyed Angel Zárraga of Mr. Gelman, a movie producer, on the set, to a sexually charged Rivera of the glamorous Mrs. Gelman surrounded by calla lilies. Through Sept. 8. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—**"Victorians, Moderns, and Beats"** combines recent acquisitions—manuscripts, letters, and ephemera from Irish, British, and American writers—with the first public display of items from the Jack Kerouac archive. Two early versions of "On the Road" are on view, as is a pop-up valentine he made for his mother at age eleven. But these are outdone by his group of drawings detailing a fantasy baseball league that counted the Chryslers, the Pontiacs, and the Fords among its teams. For those who are lukewarm about Beats and baseball, there are original drafts by Dylan Thomas and Whitman, letters from Joyce, and volumes inscribed by Melville and E. B. White. Through July 27. (Open

Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 7:30.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM

144 W. 125th St. (864-4500)—**"Black Romantic,"** a feel-good show of figurative paintings by twenty-nine African-American artists (and one West Indian) working, for the most part, outside the rarefied world of contemporary art, is the museum's answer to the Guggenheim's recent Norman Rockwell retrospective. (In other words, check your irony at the door.) Standouts include a superb chiaroscuro portrait of a napping workman by Dean Mitchell (justifiably dubbed the "Vermeer of ordinary black people" in a recent review), the taut portraits of basketball players by Kadir Nelson, and Keith Duncan's photo-collages that recast Cain and Abel as young men of the hip-hop era on the street. But, as is the case with Rockwell, illustration can trump painterly concerns and much of the work here seems created explicitly for reproduction, notably the mawkish fantasies of hard-bodied angels by Toni L. Taylor and Gerald Griffin. Viewers may sympathize with the curator, Thelma Golden, who writes that she was unsettled by what she "perceived to be the overwrought sentiment, strident essentialism, and problematic authenticity" of some of the works on view. Through June 23. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

GALLERIES-UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

MAURIZIO CATTELAN

Does the Italian trickster's unsettling "Frank & Jamie"—two lifelike mannequins of New York City housing policemen standing on their heads against a wall—mock the Finest and make light of September 11th? One might think so by taking the figures as twin towers, their inversion as a death symbol, and their jolly-cop personalities as malicious caricature. But the work may also be deemed friendly and charming—and, after all, it's "only art." The emotional effect of Cattelan's provocation is typically dicey. Does the work liberate us from naïve equations of art and life, or does it run afoul of Theodor Adorno's injunction that lyric poetry after Auschwitz be taboo? Through June 15. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 977-7160.)

RICHARD DIEBENKORN

For roughly a decade, before he returned to abstraction in the late sixties, the "Ocean Park" master made some of the clumsiest and loveliest life studies ever drawn or painted. Forty-four of them are on view here: brusque summaries of women reading or resting; gimlet-eyed faces; a few glances around the studio. With their cool, marbled color and seemingly casual draftsmanship, they're the opposite of "inimitable." Generations of art students have impersonated Diebenkorn's painterliness without getting very near the vexed elegance of the originals. Through June 7. (Artemis Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 445-0444.)

RACHEL FEINSTEIN

Picture a Skittles commercial set in the Italian Baroque and you get an idea of the confectionery sculpture installed in Sotheby's nine-story atrium. (It's the second site-specific commission by a young artist in a series produced in part by the Art Production Fund.) Rainbow stripes line the arched footpath of the bridge, whose gilded surface is decorated with glass bubbles, twining serpents, and biomorphic bulges that invoke the gold-painted objects of Yayoi Kusama. The work doesn't command much attention from below, but up close it feels like the rebellious daughter of the Bridge of Sighs. Through Sept. 1. (Sotheby's, 72nd St. at York Ave. 606-7000.)

KIKI OF MONTPARNASSE

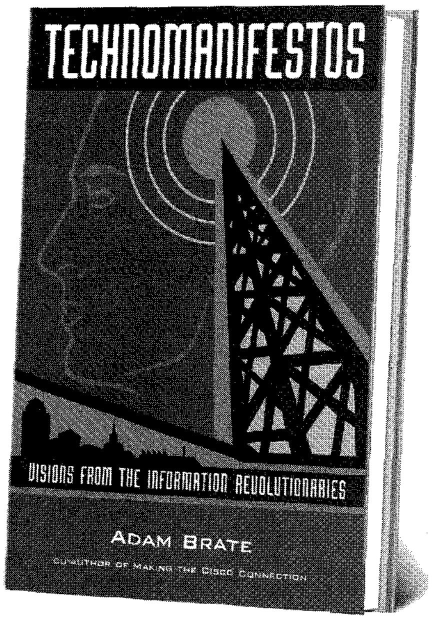
Kiki is best known as the muse of Man Ray (in his most famous photograph he transformed her back into a violin), but she modelled for everyone from Calder to Léger. (That's her fragmented face in Léger's "Ballet Mécanique," being screened at Anthology Film Archives in conjunction with this show.) Ernest Hemingway wrote the introduction to her memoirs; a copy is displayed in a vitrine gallery alongside an image from a Man Ray book that could make Mapplethorpe blush. Also on view are a group of Kiki's guileless, colorful paintings, bucolic scenes that sold out when first exhibited, in Paris in 1927. Through May 24. (Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223.)

JIM PETERS

As usual, the Provincetown artist's libidinous reveries look vaguely derivative and irritatingly self-indulgent, but still alluring. "Truro Afternoon," the finest new painting in this grab bag of recent and older work, shows a woman wearing only a tank top napping on a mattress, while a small child lies on the floor below. The familial implications offset the voyeurism a little too neatly, but it really doesn't matter, because the grayish, shuttered half-light in the room is the painting's real achievement. Through June 30. (CDS, 76 E. 79th St. 772-9555.)

"HAIR STORIES"

Ruth Marten, an artist who paints nothing but fanciful coiffures, has curated this lavish assortment of real, synthetic, and surreal hair styles, or representations thereof. The blondes catch your attention first: William Hogarth's "The Five Orders of Perriwig as They Were Worn at the Late Coronation" complements the blow-dried plumage of John Waters's "Farrah" and Paul Pfeiffer's bizarre basilica of Barbie tresses. But the brunettes—especially the gleamingly dark icons by Christina Ramberg, Ray Yoshida, Nadine Robinson, and Marten herself—are the works you want to run your fingers through. Through May 24. (Baumgold, 74 E. 79th St. 861-7338.)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TEXERE

Short List

MARTIN PURYEAR
McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 688-5951.
Through June 21.
ED RUSCHA
C&M Arts, 45 E. 78th St. 861-0020.
Through June 8.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

KIM COLLMER
Collmer sets her stop-action animations in an outer-space landscape made out of sequins and clay. Wisps of cotton drift in and out like mist, rain falls in the form of beaded strings, and a disco ball rotates like a thrift-store planet. All three of the short films (the longest is nine minutes) have a bluish cast, as if filmed in moonlight. Collmer's sense of the whimsical recalls Calder's "Circus" and the animations of Luca Buvoli, but the mixture of sweet and strange is entirely her own. Through June 9. (White Columns, 320 W. 13th St. 924-4212.)

KATARZYNA KOZYRA
The Polish artist speaks in the lingua franca of sex and violence. In one room of her New York début, monitors and photographs show young men—naked except for a distinctly vaginal pink loincloth—lolling about self-consciously, à la Vanessa Beecroft. In the more compelling back room, a group of weapons buffs go about their weekend routine, armed with bazookas, machine guns, flamethrowers and explosives. The violence creates occasionally lovely images: at one point a shack detonates and a sort of Joel Shapiro sculpture of floating planks preens for a moment in midair. Through June 1. (Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. 727-3323.)

Short List

A. BALASUBRAMANIAM
Talwar, 108 E. 16th St. 673-3096.
Through June 18.
BRICE MARDEN
Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. and 523 W. 24th St.
243-0200. Through June 21.
SUSAN ROTHENBERG
Sperone Westwater, 415 W. 13th St. 431-4685.
Through June 1.
JULIA VON EICHEL
Grimm, 505 W. 28th St. 564-7662.
Through June 8.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

ELLSWORTH KELLY
In the early seventies, Kelly sorted through a huge mass of his own small jottings and sketches, arranged them onto a hundred and eighty-eight sheets of white matboard, and stored them away. Exhibited here for the first time, the "Tablets" make for an intermittently lovely, diarylike installation. Each is a little cluster of ephemera—overscribbled envelopes, newspaper clippings, a snocone wrapper. Kelly skeptics will find the whole thing a little precious; devotees will delight in spotting the prototypes for finished works like "South Ferry," "Red White," and "Gate." At the very least, the show is a casual master class in shape appreciation. Through July 24. (Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 219-2166.)

SHEILA PEPE
The artist spins (okay, crochets) sprawling webs in room-size installations made of everyday materials, in this case black and white shoelaces. The webs cast intricate shadows on the walls, which Pepe treats as round one in the Surrealist game of exquisite corpse. In one spot she simply tops a semicircular shape with a doodle of a cherry and voilà, an ice-cream sundae, in ways that transport us to a childhood time when every shadow told a story. Through June 1. (Inglett, 100 Wooster St. 343-0573.)

Short List

JACQUELINE GOUREVITCH
DFN, 176 Franklin St. 334-3400.
Through June 8.
JASON RHOADES
Zwirner, 43 Greene St. 966-9074.
Through June 29.

PHOTOGRAPHY

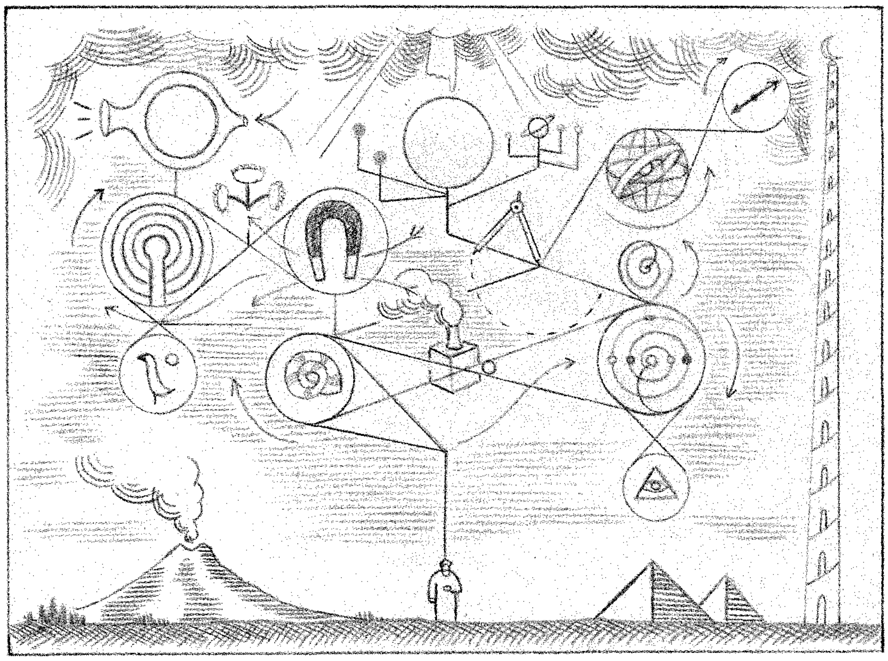
TINA BARNEY
This time Barney offers an inside look at the English upper crust. The mixture of pride and cynicism in each picture is documented by Barney's exceptional use of color and large-format photography. You can move in close to these big prints just the way you might examine the brushwork of a Velázquez. Barney captures details—a half-unzipped fly or an unsightly appliance cable—that neatly skew the practiced equipoise of her subjects. Through June 14. (Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166.)

ELINOR CARUCCI
The young photographer offers more sensual work from her private life. There is nothing new to the subject or the settings (beds, bathrooms, and couches), but the simple compositions reveal complex relationships between flesh and blood. In one, Carucci and her husband sit quietly at the edge of a bed, echoing a photograph on a different bed of a topless Carucci beside her bare-chested father. Through June 15. (Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819.)

GREGORY CREWDSON
The twenty new prints from Crewdson's ongoing "Twilight" series reveal a darker, more sexual side of the story he tells best. The last time out, one critic gave his carefully staged tableaux a name that stuck: "The Art of the X-Files." Now his scenes look more like film noir, full of sex, isolation, and obsession. The change leaves the viewer less preoccupied with the herculean feats of lighting and special effects and more drawn into his paranormal drama. Still, the best piece here, "Untitled (Empty House)," showing a single lit house in a crowded middle-class neighborhood, is unusually restrained, more Hitchcock than David Lynch. Through June 15. (Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. 206-9100.)

ROE ETHRIDGE
For this concise show of eight images, Ethridge borrowed the formats of the glossy magazines he often works for. His satirical puff- and human-interest-style photographs include a manipulated bird's-eye view of pea-green car carriers, a swirly closeup of a pink bow, and a self-portrait of the artist with a major black eye. But the stars of the show are the pigeons. In pin-sharp studio portraits, he pumps up the winged nuisances to the size of eagles and immortalizes them in heroic poses. Through June 1. (Kreps, 516A W. 20th St. 741-8849.)

DAVID LEVINTHAL
Levinthal, whose influential book "Hitler Moves East" set toy soldiers in seemingly documentary battlefield scenarios, now directs dolls to explore another taboo: pornography. (These luminous Polaroids are already fetish objects to begin with—there are only five of the large-format cameras that produce them.) The dolls, meticulously (even lovingly) assembled from model kits, pose in candidly erotic if self-consciously lurid setups, making fairly naked points about desire and photography. Through June 15. (Morris, 465 W. 23rd St. 727-2752.)



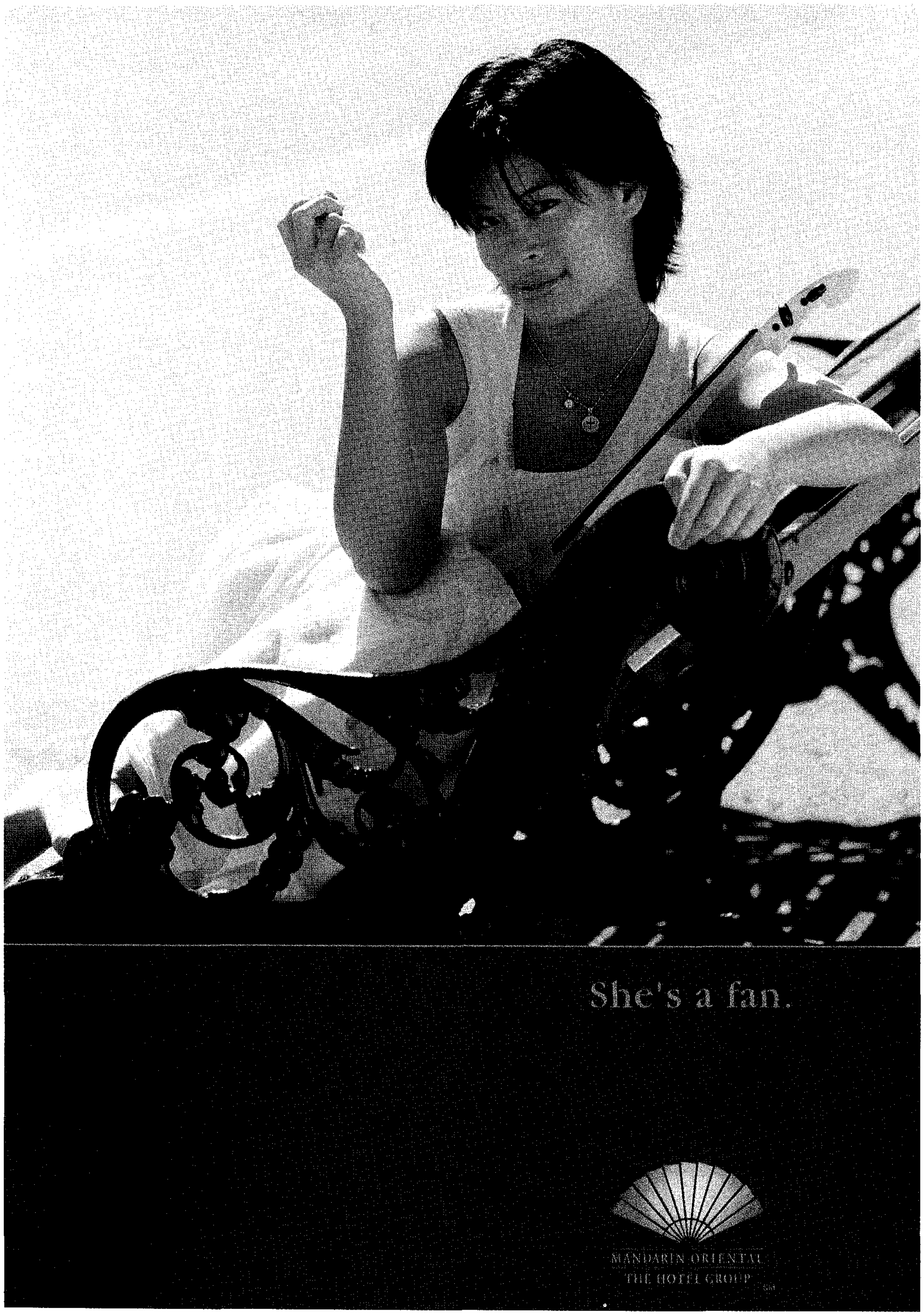
A celebration of Athanasius Kircher, at New York University (see Above and Beyond).

RICHARD MCGUIRE

RAY K. METZKER
No photographer captures city rhythms better. Using his own composite technique on a rediscovered batch of the shady street shots from the sixties, Metzker lines up rows of overlapping, double-exposed shots—of the hustling arrivals at a bus terminal or of the action at a hot-dog stand. He repeats the world-weary characters and layered reflections and shadows, but unexpectedly. With titles like "Hot Diggedy" and "Yikes," it's hard not to see him as a bebop photographer. Through June 15. (Laurence Miller, 20 W. 57th St. 397-3930.)

ORIT RAFF
This exhibition, "The Pot Calling the Kettle Black," includes closeups of rubber dish gloves, the stains on uncleanable pots, and the bars of soap that dishwashers use to clean their bodies. Stains from a few overcooked hot dogs are countered by the promises engraved in the bars of soap: Caress, Dove, and Queen show up in the company of a brand called Dirty Girl. Through June 22. (Saul, 535 W. 22nd St. 627-2410.)

SHOJI UEDA
Unlike Japan's other great postwar photographers (such as Daido Moriyama and Takuma Nakahira), who took their cameras to the streets of Tokyo, Shoji Ueda travelled to the dunes in western Japan. The photographs from that series are remarkable for their grand absurdity—patient Japanese men in Western suits and women in kimonos pose in the sand against a blank, bright sky. But the images are also an elegant expression of the country's odd postwar twilight period. They convey all the uncertainties their subjects must have felt but also capture the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photographer's optimistic belief in resilience. Ueda might be the perkiest Surrealist ever. Through June 15. (292 Gallery, 120 Wooster St. 431-0292.)

"CHILD LABOR AND THE PICTORIALIST IDEAL"
This fascinating show of vintage photographs contrasts Lewis Hines's investigative portraits of American child laborers with romantic depictions of childhood taken by six pictorialist photographers, including Edward Weston and Alfred Stieglitz, from 1890 to 1925. Hines's hard-bitten newsies, oyster shuckers, and mill workers are captured in unarguably harsh conditions. But his subjects often show an exuberance that's lacking in their carefully staged, hazily lit counterparts (cf. Clarence White's allegorical scene of Pan at his pipes or Gertrude Käsebier's idylls of mother and child). Through July 13. (Grey, 100 Washington Sq. E. 998-6780.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 857-0000—**"Dream Street: W. Eugene Smith's Pittsburgh Photographs."** ♦ **"Rise of the Picture Press: Photographic Reportage in Illustrated Magazines, 1918-1939"** is plastered with magazine photographs, including work from Andres Kertesz, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and Margaret Bourke-White. The exhibition chronicles a heady time—the dawn of photojournalism—when magazines introduced innovations like montage (grafting Garbo's face onto the Sphinx), invented a "Separated at Birth"-like feature (placing a llama's face beside a portrait of Mr. Neville Chamberlain), and turned for the first time to bystanders to get records of major events, as in "Amateur Photographs of the Hindenberg's Last Landing." Both shows through June 16. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10-5; Fridays, 10-8; Saturdays and Sundays, 10-6.)

Short List

SHELBY LEE ADAMS
Milo, 552 W. 24th St. 414-0370. Through June 1.

LISA KERESZI
Pierogi, 177 N. 9th St., Williamsburg. 718-599-2144. Through May 27.

PATRICK MC MULLAN
Corning, 667 Madison Ave., at 61st St. 752-1441. Through May 25.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

SOTHEBY'S
May 22 at 10:15 A.M.: The first session of an impressive sale of American art and sculpture. Among the highlights are major works by Chase, Prendergast, Bellows, and Hartley, along with Rockwell's iconic painting "Rosie the Riveter" (estimated to bring up to five million dollars). ♦ May 22 at 2: The final session, including works by Homer, Remington, and Cole ("Catskill Mountain House," another classic image). ♦ May 23 at 10:15 A.M.: "Important Americana," including silver, flags, folk art, and furniture. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

CHRISTIE'S
May 22 at 10 A.M.: Art and antiques from the estate of Doris Merrill Magowan. ♦ May 22 at 10 A.M. and 2: European furniture, works of art, tapestries, and carpets. ♦ May 23 at 10 A.M. and 2: European ceramics, including the Pompey collection. ♦ May 24 at 10 A.M. and 2: Printed books and manuscripts. ♦ May 28 at 7 and May 29 at 10 A.M.: A sale of twentieth-century and contemporary Latin-American art, including works by Matta, Kahlo, and Botero. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 636-2000.)

PHILLIPS
May 22 at 2: Design from the early twentieth century to the present, including furniture and decorative pieces by the Austrian-American modernist Frederick Kiesler. (3 W. 57th St. 940-1200.)

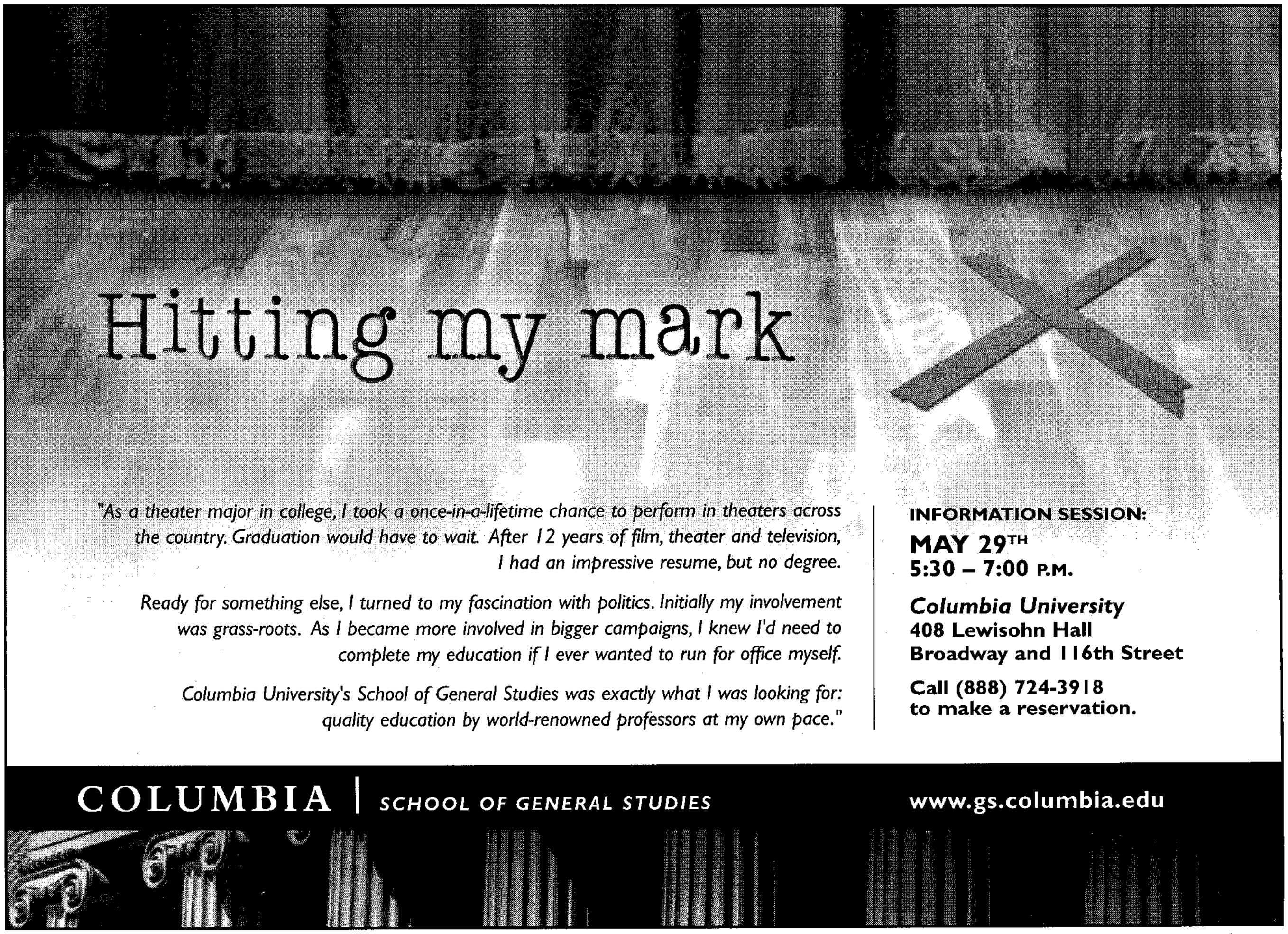
DOYLE
May 22 at 10 A.M.: "Important Couture, Costume Jewelry, and Accessories." Property that belonged to the late Carrie Donovan—the doyenne of New York fashion writers and star of Old Navy commercials—is a highlight of the sale, which includes two drawings by Al Hirschfeld. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730.)

SWANN
May 23 at 10:30 A.M.: American watercolors and drawings. ♦ May 23 at 2:30: An auction of paintings, drawings, and prints by Ben Shahn, from a private collection. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

EOS ORCHESTRA: "THE RHINEGOLD"
Jonathan Sheffer's success with Eos has always been as much entrepreneurial as musical: it's a rare conductor who can entice an octogenarian Paul Bowles out of his Moroccan redoubt for a New York festival of his music, or who can gain privileged access to unpublished early scores by Copland and Bernstein. The chamber orchestra's last concert of the season also has the showman's touch—an "Eos adaptation" of Jonathan Dove's English-language abridgment of Wagner's "Ring" prelude, first performed by England's Birmingham Touring Opera in 1990. Christopher Alden's modest but fanciful staging is set in an Upper East Side apartment under renovation, and cuts to the score—this version clocks in at about two hours—make it possible for some of the cast (which includes Wendy Hill, Beth Clayton, Chris Pedro Trakas, and Jake Gardner) to double up on roles. But this remains one of the great challenges of the repertory, and Sheffer's production will be something of an adventure—which is probably the whole point. (Ethical Culture Society Concert Hall, 2 W. 64th St. 691-6415. May 23 and May 25 at 8.)



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BOOK CURRENTS

Beached

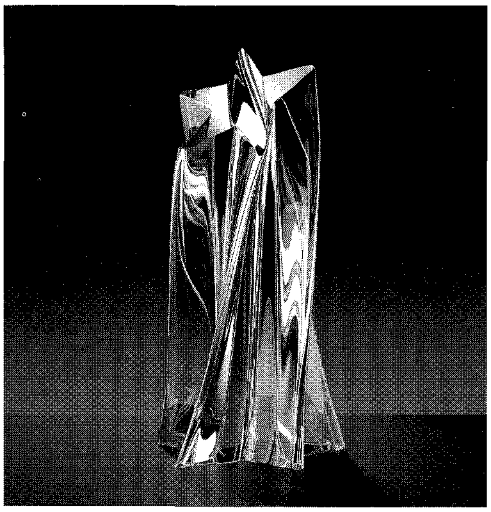
Before the era of overpopulated time-shares, minivans, and Lizzie Grubman, Long Island's East End was famed as the "premier retreat for America's artistic and literary luminaries." So write Helen A. Harrison and Constance Ayers Denne in **HAMPTONS BOHEMIA** (Chronicle), a colorful ode to the Hamptons' often overlooked cultural legacy. Filled with photos of such residents and weekenders as Jackson Pollock, Kurt Vonnegut, and Truman Capote at work and at play, "Hamptons Bohemia" reveals a South Fork that first became a haven for artists in the nineteenth century, when James Fenimore Cooper and Winslow Homer were drawn to the remote beaches and austere potato fields. By the nineteen-forties, wide-eyed locals could be overheard asking, "Can you tell us where we'll find the Surrealists?"

DOUG ALLEN

As one East Ender, Edward Albee, points out, the Hamptons have since become "suburbs of New York City." Yet some evidence of artistic exile remains. In **STUDIOS BY THE SEA** (Abrams), the former *Interview* editor Bob Colacello and the photographer Jonathan Becker document the current crop of beachside artists, including Julian Schnabel, who has set up shop in an 1882 Stanford White mansion. Architects have also gravitated to the East End. **WEEKEND UTOPIA** (Princeton Architectural Press), by the lifelong Hamptonian Alastair Gordon, explores the idea that the "beach house was the sonnet form of American architecture." It was in the Hamptons that White, Philip Johnson, and Robert Venturi worked out their ideas, and where now, as Gordon ruefully notes, ersatz manor houses twice the size of the White House gobble up the landscape. As Capote warned back in the seventies, "Some of the potato fields, so beautiful, flat and still, may not be here next year."

—*Mark Rozzo*

SPARKLE



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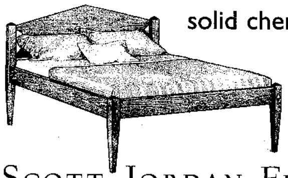

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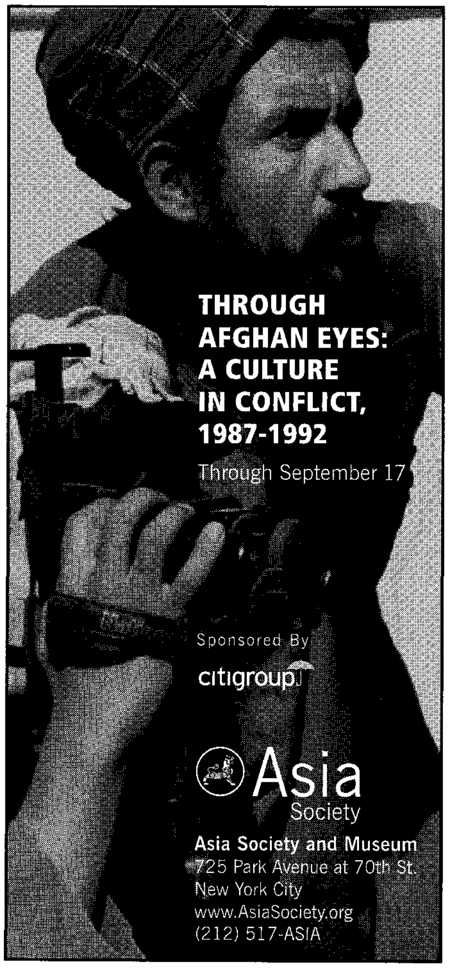

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ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC: "THANK YOU, KURT MASUR"
In the second of his final three subscription programs, the music director leads a concert of extremes: Schnittke's Cello Concerto No. 1 (with Natalia Gutman), full of Soviet-era irony, and Bruckner's Symphony No. 3. (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500. May 23 and May 25 at 8 and May 24 at 11 A.M.) ♦ Masur also conducts Mahler's Symphony No. 1 in D Major, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. (Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. May 27 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

NEW YORK CHAMBER SYMPHONY
The annual Irene Diamond Concert, held in cooperation with Young Concert Artists, provides a showcase for musicians on the brink of major careers. Timothy Fain, an American violinist already active with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, performs Chausson's "Poème"; the Korean violinist Ju-Young Baek plays Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto; and the Finnish pianist Paavli Jumppanen is the soloist in the Concerto No. 1 in D Minor by Brahms. Gerard Schwarz conducts. (Alice Tully Hall. May 22 at 7. 307-6656.)

MUSIC OUT-OF-DOORS
Two free events. May 26 at 2: The Bronx Arts Ensemble Orchestra presents a tent concert of Gershwin, Rodgers, Bernstein, and other American composers, including music from Hollywood films. (Van Cortlandt Park, Broadway at 246th St., the Bronx. For more information, call 718-601-7399.) ♦ May 27 at 1:30: Green-Wood Cemetery, whose hundreds of "residents" provide a *Who's Who* of great names in American history and the arts, will host the Goldman Memorial Band (the city's finest), the Merchant Marine Academy Fanfare Trumpets, and the Great Day Chorale in a Memorial Day concert. The program includes music by Bernstein, Sousa, and Shostakovich (the "Festive Overture"), along with a selection of spirituals and patriotic songs. (Fifth Ave. at 25th St., Brooklyn. For more information, call 212-560-7587. Patrons are advised to bring their own seating.)

RECITALS

REBECCA PECHEFSKY
In her Weill Recital Hall début, the young harpsichordist adds forgotten music (by the Baroque master François D'Agincourt) and a première (Frank J. Oteri's "Is 5") to a concert anchored by Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 5, in which she's assisted by an ensemble of period instruments. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 22 at 8.)

REGINA RESNIK VOCAL SERIES
The eminent American mezzo-soprano hosts a concert devoted to the influence of Gypsy culture on classical song, including works by such composers as Rodrigo, Rossini, Bizet, and Léhar; the singers are Michael Philip Davis and Hilda Ramos (a début). (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. May 22 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 772-4448.)

GWENDOLYN TOTH
The fortepianist performs sonatas by Haydn and Mozart, in a free lunchtime concert at St. Francis of Assisi Church. (135 W. 31st St. May 23 at 1:15. No tickets necessary.)

AMERICAN ACCENT
The growing strength of women in American composition can be measured not only in their numbers but in the diverse styles in which they choose to work. The ensemble (which includes the soprano Gayla Bauer Blaisdell, the clarinettist Alan Kay, and members of the Lark Quartet) presents a concert of songs and chamber pieces by such leading lights as Shulamit Ran ("Private Game," a slashing bit of Chicago modernism), Augusta Read Thomas, and Judith Lang Zaimont; works by George Antheil and Bernard Rands—Ms. Thomas's distinguished husband—add some context. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. 734-2130. May 23 at 7:30.)

ARIANE LALLEMAND AND JOSEPH KUBERA
"Interpretations," a series of concerts presented by the World Music Institute, is dedicated to advancing the music of experimentalist composers; once rebels, they now represent a strong tradition of their own. In the final program of their season at Merkin Concert Hall, the cellist and the pianist, both veterans of the downtown scene, perform music by Maria de Alvear, Earle Brown, Petr Kotik, and others. (129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. May 23 at 8.)

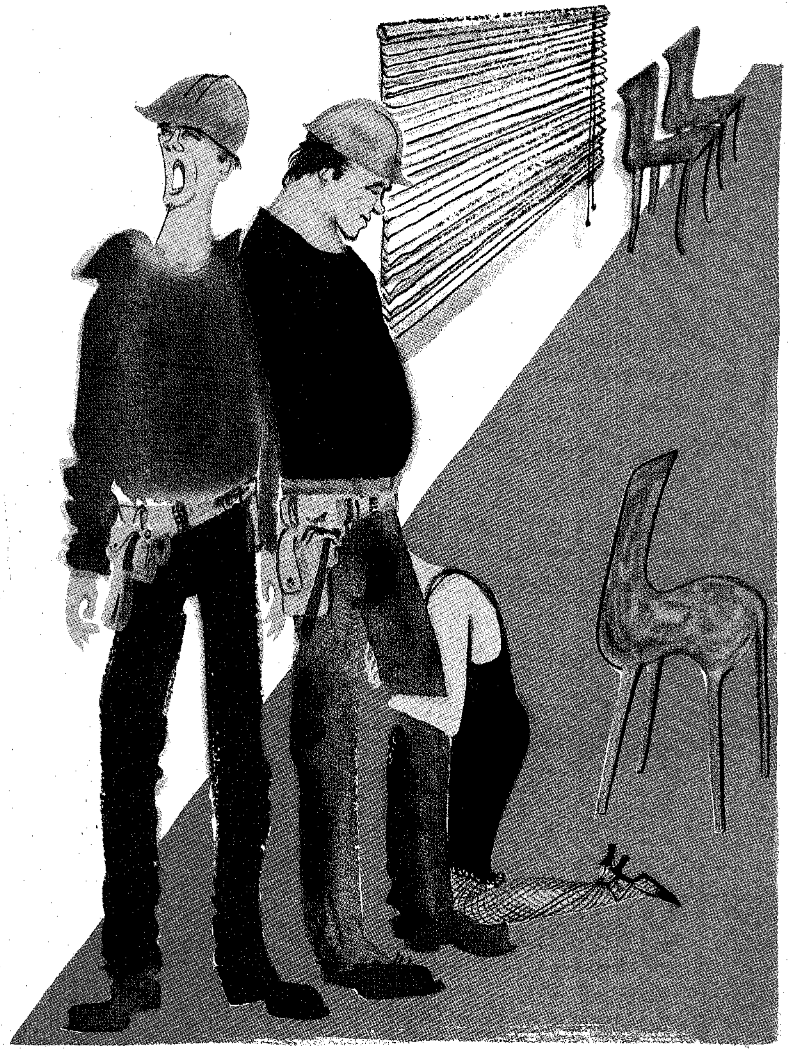
ENSEMBLE SOSPESO
The contemporary ensemble (which includes the soprano Lucy Shelton and the accordion virtuoso William Schimmel) presents a theatrically oriented program of music by Wolfgang Rihm, John Adams ("Road Movies"), Earl Kim ("Earthlight," a "romanza" on texts by Beckett), and others. (Tenri Cultural Institute, 43A W. 13th St. 663-1675. May 23-24 at 8:30.)

BARGEMUSIC
The mezzo-soprano Phyllis Pancella, a star of City Opera, is the special guest for a pair of programs that also feature such artists as the pianist André-Michel Schub and the violist Paul Neubauer. May 23-24 at 7:30: Dominick Argento's "Miss Manners on Music"—wry and funny settings of excerpts from the columns of Judith Martin, the Washington *Post's* etiquette writer—opens a concert including Brahms's Second Piano Trio and songs by Mascagni and Tosti. ♦ May 25 at 7:30 and May 26 at 4: A varied program of songs and chamber pieces by such composers as Ligeti, Debussy, and Chausson (the "Chanson Perpétuelle"). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

READINGS
May 22 at 7: Valerie Steiker reads from her memoir, "The Leopard Hat: A Daughter's Story." (The Corner Bookstore, Madison Ave. at 93rd St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ May 22 at 7: Alice Carey reads from her new book, "I'll Know It When I See It: A Daughter's Search for Home in Ireland." (BookCourt, 163 Court St., Brooklyn. No tickets necessary.) ♦ May 23 at 6: The longtime *New Yorker* writer Lillian Ross gives a preview of her forthcoming book, "Reporting Back: Notes on Journalism." (Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. between 103rd and 104th Sts. For more information, call 534-1672, ext. 257.) ♦ May 26 at 7: Denis Johnson, the author of the short-story collection "Jesus' Son," reads from his latest work for the theatre. (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.)

TALKS
May 23 at 7: The documentary filmmaker Errol Morris, the historian Anthony Grafton, and the curator David Wilson join other Athanasius Kircher enthusiasts for an appreciation of the seventeenth-century polymath. Presented by the New York Institute for the Humanities. (Hemmerdinger Hall, New York University, 100 Washington Sq. E. 998-2100.) ♦ May 23 at 7:30: The poet Carolyn Forché discusses the life and work of the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet with the help of the poet Talat Halman, the actor Defne Halman, and the translator Randy Blasing, who will read Hikmet's poems in English and in their original language. (Kaye Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. Tickets at the door.) ♦ May 23 at 8: The actor Michael J. Fox talks about Parkinson's disease with the radio talk-show host Leonard Lopate. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5500.)



Eos stages an English-language version of "Das Rheingold" on May 23 and May 25.

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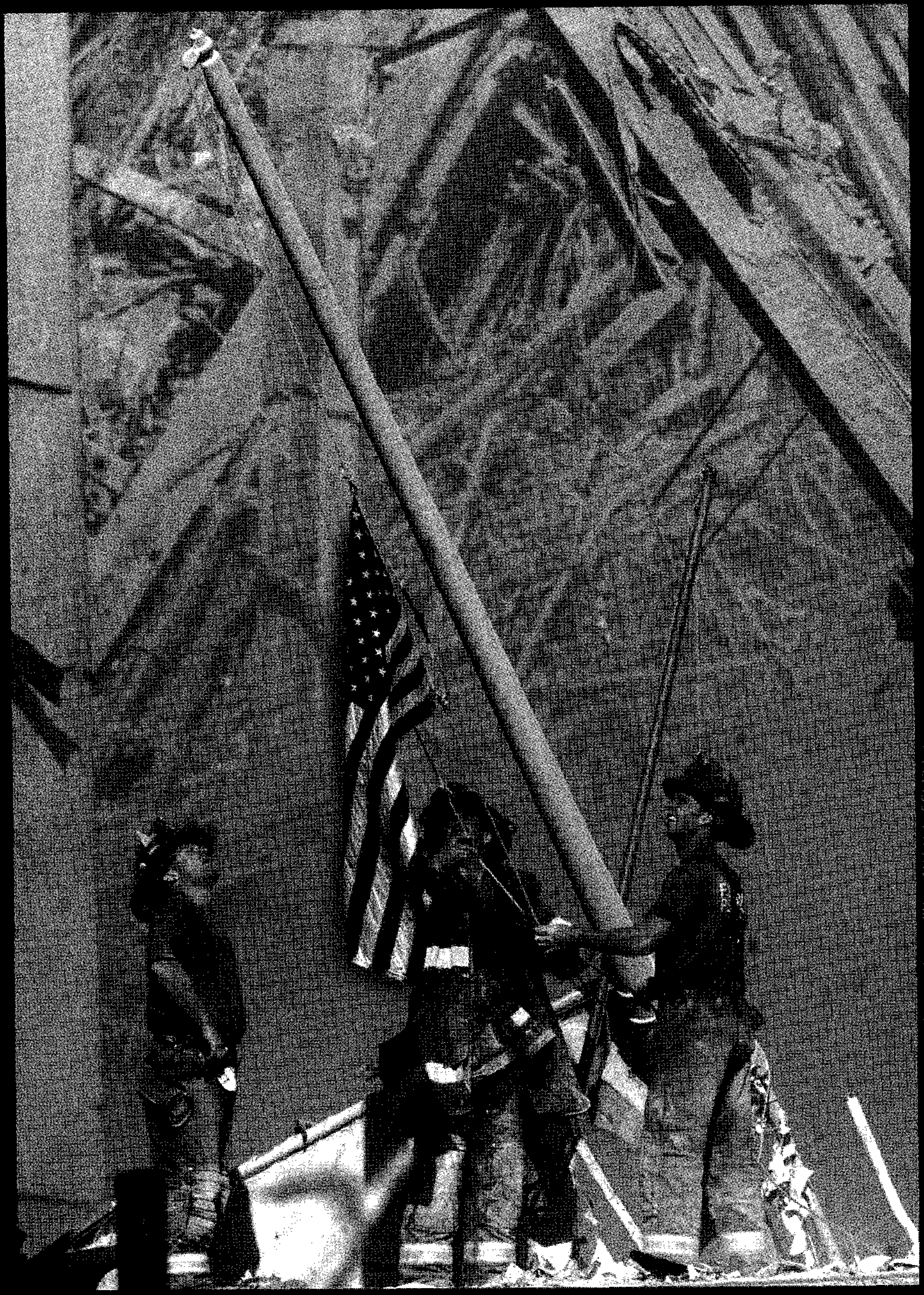

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MOVIES OPENING

BARTLEBY
Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening May 24.

CQ
Roman Coppola wrote and directed this drama set in Paris in 1969, about a young American filmmaker (Jeremy Davies) who takes over the troubled production of a low-budget sci-fi movie. With Angela Lindvall, Gérard Depardieu, and Élodie Bouchez. Opening May 24.

ENOUGH
An abused wife (Jennifer Lopez) takes revenge on her husband (Billy Campbell) in a thriller directed by Michael Apted. Opening May 24.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
Oliver Parker ("An Ideal Husband") adapts Oscar Wilde's play, with a cast that includes Frances O'Connor, Rupert Everett, Colin Firth, Reese Witherspoon, and Judi Dench. Opening May 22.

INSOMNIA
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening May 24.

SPIRIT: STALLION OF THE CIMARRON
An animated movie from Dreamworks, which follows the adventures of a wild horse during the frontier period of the American West. Voices by Matt Damon and James Cromwell. Opening May 24.

THIRTEEN CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ONE THING
Jill Sprecher ("Clockwatchers") directed this drama that weaves together the life stories of five New Yorkers, played by Clea DuVall, Alan Arkin, John Turturro, Amy Irving, and Matthew McConaughey. Opening May 24.

FILM NOTES

BARAN
Latif (Hossein Abedini), a wily Iranian teen-ager, falls in love with an Afghan refugee girl, Baran (Zahra Bahrami), who works at the same construction site as he does in Tehran. He hardly approaches her, though; he treats Baran as a kind of sacred mystery he must protect. This quietly rhapsodic movie is made in a spirit of the deepest respect. It doesn't knock you out, but it's often touching. Written and directed by the Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi. In Farsi.—*David Denby* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

BARTLEBY
You might prefer a more cheerful movie, but Jonathan Parker's adaptation of "Bartleby, the Scrivener" gets to you. Herman Melville wrote this short story, about a worker who refuses to work, when he was employed as a customs inspector in Manhattan. Parker sets the action in a drably colored modern office, so generic that it's camp. Crispin Glover, with his shock of black hair and wispy white face, is an impressive Bartleby; he pulls off the neat trick of being passive yet dangerous. He's also a maddening cipher: when he's staring up at the office vent, it's hard to tell if Bartleby has embraced the wisdom of no escape or if he's just spaced out. The veterans who round out the cast provide the needed comic relief, especially Glenne Headly as the firm's hypercordial secretary, a sexpot with flawless diction.—*Michael Agger* (Angelika Film Center.)

THE CAT'S MEOW
The darker side of true Hollywood gets an elegant, fictionalized treatment in Peter Bogdanovich's period murder mystery. The film is based on a famous scandal involving the death of movie pioneer Thomas Ince while aboard William Randolph Hearst's star-studded yacht in 1924. Bogdanovich's cast of actors—which includes Edward Herrmann as the newspaper magnate; Kirsten Dunst as his lover, the actress Marion Davies; and Jennifer Tilly as the gossip columnist Louella Parsons—all deliver arch and juicy performances. The snappy dialogue by Steven Peros, full of Tinseltown gossip, gives Bogdanovich a chance to create a flourishing comic environment that, despite the dour undertakings, bubbles to effervescent life.—*Bruce Diones* (Battery Park 16 and 64th and 2nd.)

CHANGING LANES
A young corporate lawyer (Ben Affleck) and a troubled father who works as an insurance salesman (Samuel L. Jackson) get into a minor collision on the F.D.R. Drive, and instead of just letting the damn thing go, they spend the rest of the day tormenting each other. The plot, with its matched, escalating acts of revenge, may be a contrivance, but the movie plays earnestly and well. The real subject is not revenge, but the malevolence inherent in a competitive society that occasionally breaks through the surface. Much of the writing (by Chap Taylor and Michael Tolkin) is either affecting or gratifyingly nasty. The final surprise: Ben Affleck grows up and gives the first good performance of his life.—*D.D.* (Reviewed in our issue of 5/6/02.) (Battery Park 16, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

DOGTOWN AND Z-BOYS
An exuberant documentary account of the rebirth of skateboarding in the early seventies. It seems that a fortuitous combination of newly invented polyurethane wheels and a drought in Southern California—all those drained swimming pools with their curved bottoms and vertical sides—led a bunch of surfer rats in Santa Monica to adapt their crouching, wave-touching moves to the skateboard. Stacy Peralta directed, and the documentary has lots of home movies, stills, and current interviews with the grownup Z-boys, including such former teen masters as Jay Adams and Tony Alva. The movie is too long for what it has to say, but it has a likably rough surface and an appreciation of odd talents and quirks.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center.)

ENIGMA
The title refers to the infamous encryption machine employed by the Germans in the Second World War, although viewers may be excused for noting a deeper mystery: how could anyone make such a prosaic film out of such promising material? We get a young Cambridge mathematician (Dougray Scott), who is called to Bletchley Park—the secret center of British brainwork in the fight against Enigma—to crack a new code named Shark. There, hindered by one clerk (Saffron Burrows) and helped by another (Kate Winslet), he is dragged into a saga of spying, treachery, and terrible wartime food. The task of deciphering, though laid out with a care verging on the simplistic, manages nevertheless to remain unintelligible, as does the means by which the action suddenly switches to Scotland. With Jeremy Northam as a smooth spook and, for one delirious moment, Mick Jagger.—*Anthony Lane* (4/22 & 29/02) (Cinema 3, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Village East Cinemas.)

HOLLYWOOD ENDING
Woody Allen casts himself as the washed-up movie director Val Waxman, a real pain in the neck. Téa Leoni, she of the puckered mouth and long, lean body (here draped in cashmere), is his ex-wife, Ellie, who prevails on her current boyfriend—a smoothly dominating studio boss (Treat Williams)—to give Val one last chance at a big-budget picture. As the shoot begins, Val is afflicted by hysterical blindness, and various people serve as seeing-eye dogs, though no one on the set notices he's sightless. The movie is a farce, of course, but it's still awkwardly literal. A conceit that might have worked in a Chaplin two-reeler nearly destroys a full-length feature, and the pairing of the older Allen and the exquisite Leoni is embarrassing. With George Hamilton as a curious studio personage who is always present, golf club in hand, to spy on the creative people and intimidate everyone with his perfect tan.—*D.D.* (5/20/02) (Battery Park 16, BAM Rose Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

HOME MOVIE
The documentarian Chris Smith is a connoisseur of the gnarly fringe of humanity—unreconstructed eccentrics who live by their own internal rules and systems. "Home Movie" is not a sustained leer like Smith's previous work, "American Movie," but a light, hour-long look at five people who live in unusual houses. We don't spend enough time with the subjects to really get to know them (a Florida houseboat dweller and an old lady who has retreated to a jungle tree house are the most vivid), but the queasy voyeurism that seems to be Smith's forte settles in immediately.—*M.A.* (Union Square.)

THE LADY AND THE DUKE
The latest project from the unstoppable Eric Rohmer (who, at the age of eighty-two, seems as resourceful as ever) is set during the bloodier travails of the French Revolution. A resident Englishwoman (Lucy Russell) finds that her safety in Paris is threatened, first by her ill-advised monarchism, and then by her continuing devotion to the Duke of Orleans (Jean-Claude Dreyfus), whose own Republican credentials start to crumble. As so often, Rohmer seems to be challenging himself to make as talkative a film as possible without actually sabotaging the dramatic tension; on top of that, he has shot his costumed characters on digital video, against painted cityscapes that could hardly be mistaken for the real thing. Fortunately, the plight of his heroine is just about fraught enough to survive these contrivances, and it is fun to imagine French audiences, schooled in the glories of the period, watching the parade of squabbles, whispers, and petty suspicions that is staged by a skeptical director. In French.—*A.L.* (5/13/02) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

LAGAAN
This Indian film—a period musical drama about a group of drought-stricken villagers who play a cricket match against the British authorities to avoid taxation (*lagaan*)—is pure Bollywood. The director Ashutosh Gowariker crosses a lavish romantic epic with a muscular adventure tale and comes up with an outrageously buoyant hybrid. The musical sequences burst from the story organically, and the outdoor production numbers are composed of brilliantly edited tracking shots and spectacular choreography. Not all the performances soar (the British actors seem particularly stiff), but the romantic leads are wonderful. Aamir Khan's masterly preening is worthy of a young Tony Curtis and his ladylove, played by Gracy Singh, does a Janet Leigh turn at getting her man. The daunting four-hour length leaves plenty of room for meandering subplots and misunderstandings, but the film is so visually alive and superbly structured—it also breaks for an intermission—that you will be happily taken in by its bighearted charms. In Hindi and English.—*B.D.* (Film Forum.)

LATE MARRIAGE
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Cinema Village and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

MONSOON WEDDING
Mira Nair's latest picture has been hailed as a feel-good spree, but it's better than that—a barely stable compound of the wounding, the confusing, and the appealing. The action takes place in Delhi, where a pair of middle-class parents (Lillete Dubey and Naseeruddin Shah) work themselves into a froth over the nuptials of their daughter (Vasundhara Das).

No kings. No magicians. No ladies of the lake. No singing swords.

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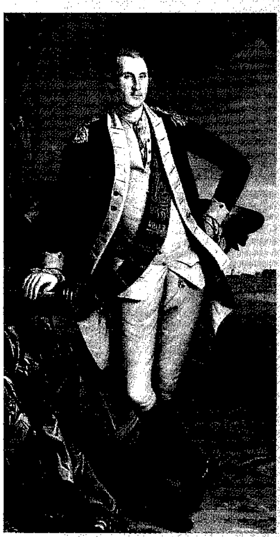
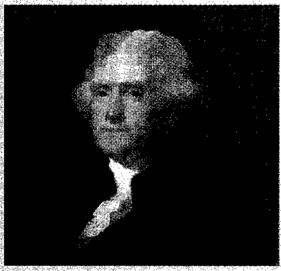


George Washington

Patrick Henry



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Her marriage is, of course, arranged; for all the racket and buzz of the film's modernity, it finds time to make the suggestion—bewildering, perhaps, to audiences here—that from this archaic arrangement can spring an enduring love. The groom is flying in from Houston, Texas; another relative travels from Australia, and you brace yourself for the cultural collisions. The result is a comedy, but only just. India's stressful poise between orthodoxy and innovation (listen for the clash of peacock and cell phone) leads to a devastating family fracture that is only half-healed by the celebrations at the end. In English and Hindi.—*A.L.* (2/18 & 25/02) (Empire 25, Sunshine Cinema, and 34th Street Theatre.)

MY VOYAGE TO ITALY

Martin Scorsese's passionate four-hour elucidation of Italian cinema, from "Cabiria" to "8 ½," starts by capturing the intimate aura that movies shown on TV could give off in the forties and fifties—he saw his first Italian films on a small black-and-white set with the rest of his Little Italy immigrant family. The director embraces the glories of Rossellini, Visconti, Fellini, and Antonioni with the amplitude and precision of an inspired exegete. You don't have to agree with all of Scorsese's enthusiasms to be swept into his celebration of a cinema that encompassed both ancient myth and contemporary reality and achieved a peerless gritty poetry—especially in the work of Vittorio De Sica. Scorsese does him justice with long, loving looks at "Shoeshine" and "Umberto D." as well as his official classic, "The Bicycle Thief."—*Michael Sragow* (Anthology Film Archives; May 25-26.)

NINOTCHKA

"Garbo Laughs," said the original 1939 ads, but the story goes that when the time came for her laughing scene she pantomimed laughter beautifully, yet no sound emerged; it was later provided by someone anonymous. The rest of her performance is her own—and she brings her incredible sensual abandon to the role of a glum, scientifically trained Bolshevik envoy who succumbs to Parisian freedom—i.e., champagne. This film includes a historic encounter, when the great instinctual artist of the screen meets the great stylist and technician of the stage—Ina Claire, as a Russian grand duchess. The fur flies exquisitely.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum; May 24-25.)

THE PIANO TEACHER

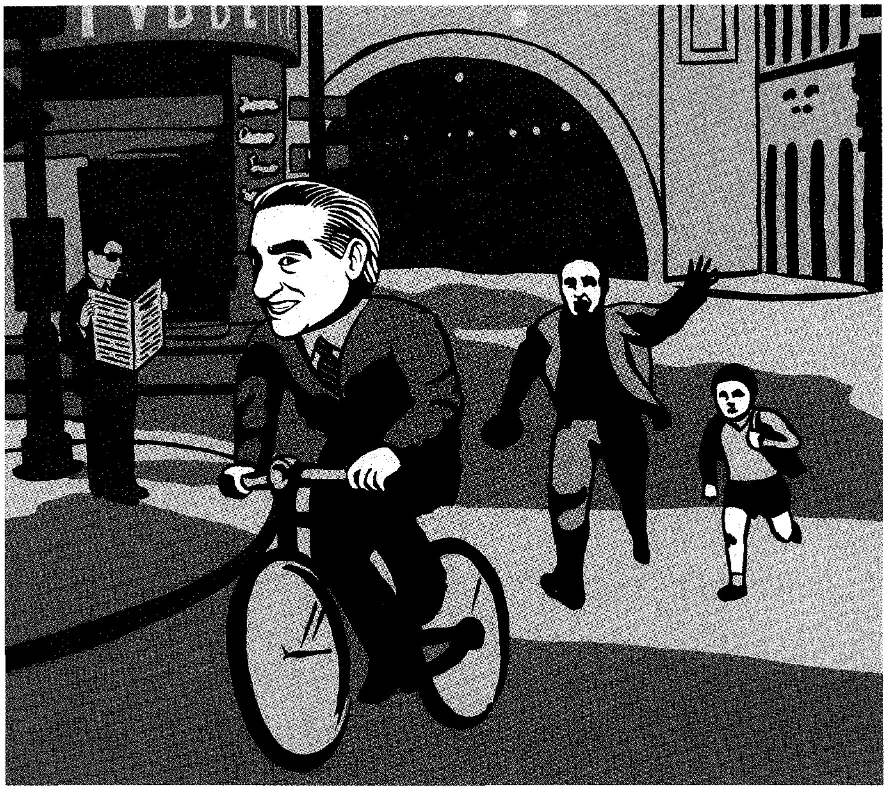
Michael Haneke's calmly lucid masterpiece is about a seemingly unmanageable subject: a sadomasochistic piano teacher, Professor Erika Kohut (Isabelle Huppert), who maintains a sternly proper façade at the Vienna Conservatory while tormenting and playing dirty tricks on her talented students. Erika lives in an apartment with her hysterically possessive mother (Annie Girardot)—the two take turns slapping each other—and she tries to control the insolently charming and handsome young piano student (Benoît Magimel) who wants to be her lover. She may be a certifiable nut straight out of clinical literature, but she's also a remarkable dramatic creation—an appalling but plausible human being brought to life by one of the world's bravest actresses. Huppert, whose masklike face seethes with rage, gives a classic account of repression and sexual hypocrisy. This is a genuinely shocking movie (one scene of self-mutilation is hard to take), but it's supremely intelligent, too, and there isn't a trace of sensationalism. In French.—*D.D.* (4/1/02) (Cinema Village and Sutton 1 and 2.)

SPIDER-MAN

The perils and advantages of being bitten by a genetically modified spider are made abundantly clear in Sam Raimi's enjoyable, if broken-backed, exercise in high-cost pulp. Tobey Maguire plays Peter Parker, who develops a useful ability to hurl threads of web from his wrists and thus becomes, to his delight, the highest swinger in town. This prowess earns him the adoration of Mary Jane (Kirsten Dunst) and the enmity of the Green Goblin (Willem Dafoe), whose infinite capacity for evil is slightly undercut by the fact that he began life as a man called Norman. The movie is all over the place, unable to decide, for instance, whether New York should be shot as a livable city or as a Gothamite gulf of crime; similarly, Dafoe delivers a cartoon while Maguire offers a funny, rueful study in uncertain heroics. The picture is more violent than it has any right to be: why bother to throw grenades at Spider-Man, when you can presumably chase him away with a stiff broom?—*A.L.* (5/13/02) (Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Chelsea West, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

STAR WARS: EPISODE II—ATTACK OF THE CLONES

The Republic? The Federation? The Separatists? The clone army? The droid army? The Siths? The Kith? The Kin? The plot is incomprehensible to anyone over fourteen, and the actors intone their starched-collar lines as if they were attending a convention of rural vicars. But, allowing for some dull moments, George Lucas's latest movie has considerable style. Digital invention is becoming grander, wilder, more free-spirited: the multi-levelled cities of the future overflow with life. It would be nice to think that Lucas's visual imagination is just now taking off.—*D.D.* (5/20/02) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Murray Hill Cinemas, Olympia I and II, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 64th and 2nd, and Ziegfeld.)



At Anthology Film Archives, Martin Scorsese's "My Voyage to Italy."

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

UNFAITHFUL

Connie (Diane Lane), a suburban New York housewife, gets picked up in SoHo by a sexy young Frenchman (Olivier Martinez) and falls into a passionate afternoons-only affair; her husband, Edward (Richard Gere), senses from the beginning that something is amiss. The director Adrian Lyne has been making erotic dramas for years and this is his most earnest and nonexploitative effort to date. The movie is very scrupulous about the feelings of Connie and Edward and the damage adultery can do to a family. If only the characters were more interesting. The three principals have no dimensions beyond what's functionally required by the situation, and we can't quite tell if the husband and wife are silent because their marriage is a zero or because the screenwriters forgot to give them something to say. Lane goes through the stages of denial, resistance, joy, and guilt with virtuoso ability; Gere, looking a little older these days, is quiet and saddened—it's amusing to see him wearing the horns for a change. The movie is based on Claude Chabrol's 1969 thriller "La Femme Infidèle" but it lacks the cool perversity of the original; it's a highly responsible sex movie.—*D.D.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 85th Street, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Village East Cinemas.)

UNFAITHFULLY YOURS

One of the most sophisticated slapstick comedies ever made, this 1948 classic, written and directed by Preston Sturges, got terrible reviews and failed at the box office. The hero, a symphony conductor (a parody of Sir Thomas Beecham), is played by Rex Harrison, who is at one of his comic peaks. During a concert the conductor, convinced that his wife (Linda Darnell) has been unfaithful to him, fantasizes how he will handle the situation in three different ways, according to the style of the music on the program—Rossini's Overture to "Semiramide," the "Pilgrim's Chorus" from Wagner's "Tannhäuser," and Tchaikovsky's "Francesca da Rimini." After the concert, he tries to carry them out, scrambling them hopelessly. There are so many great lines and situations in this movie that writers and directors have been stealing from it for years.—*P.K.* (Film Forum; May 26-27.)

Y TU MAMÁ TAMBIÉN

The latest movie from the Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón, who came to Hollywood to make "A Little Princess" and "Great Expectations" and who has now returned in triumph to his homeland. The story is a stripped-down road movie: two teenage friends, one rich (Diego Luna) and one poor (Gael García Bernal), borrow a car and set off to find the perfect beach, in the company of a Spanish woman (Maribel Verdú) who is not merely older, but married. Plus, she seems inexplicably happy to take either, or both, of them to bed. All the boys' dreams, in other words, have come true, and they can hardly handle it. What ensues is a sad and sexy picaresque, as everyone's illusions are peeled off along with their clothes. Cuarón's style is so open and relaxed, and his actors are so attuned to one another, that not until the final scene, with its litany of revelations, do we see that what felt life-affirming has also been a meditation on the slide of time, and on the off-stage presence of death. Unrated, and therefore full of proper sex, with all the improprieties intact. In Spanish.—*A.L.* (3/18/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Sunshine Cinema, and 34th Street Theatre.)

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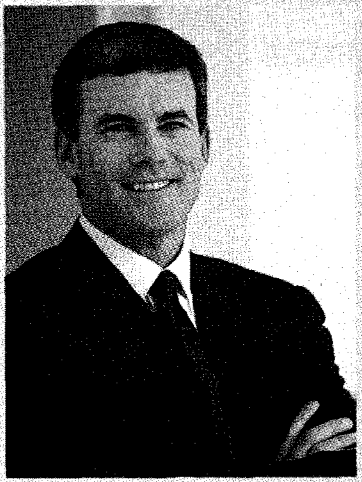

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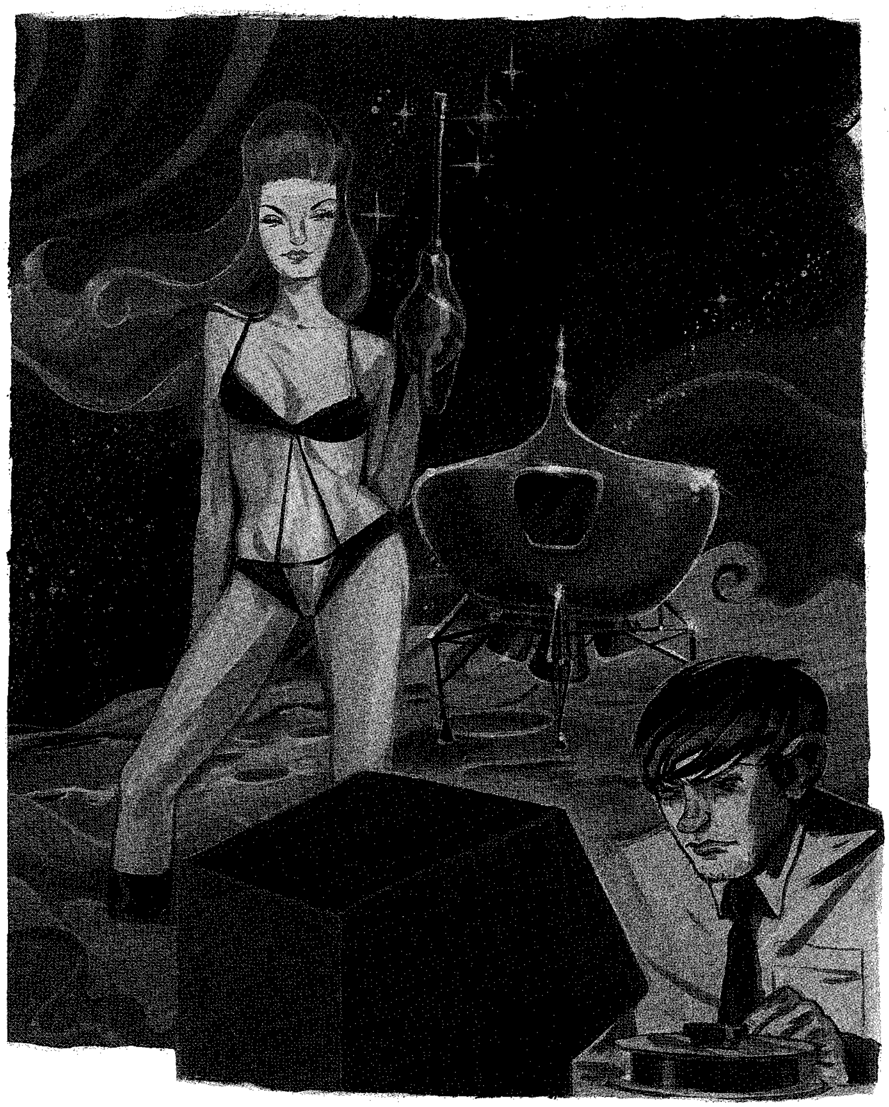

Angela Lindvall and Jeremy Davies in "CQ," opening May 24.

ZOHAR LAZAR

ALSO PLAYING

ABOUT A BOY
Battery Park 16, Beekman, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.
THE BELIEVER
Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.
CREMASTER 3
Film Forum.
THE LAST WALTZ
Union Square.
THE MYSTIC MASSEUR
Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, and Cinema 1.
RAIN
Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, and Eastside Playhouse.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—"Rescued Treasures," restored films. May 25 at 2: "The Sin of Nora Moran" (1933, Phil Goldstone). ♦ May 25 at 4: "Gilda" (1946, Charles Vidor). ♦ May 26 at 2: "Dante's Inferno" (1924, Henry Otto). ♦ May 26 at 4: "It Should Happen to You" (1954, George Cukor). ♦ Repertory nights. May 25-26 at 6:30: "That Obscure Object of Desire" (1977, Luis Buñuel; in French and Spanish).
ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—May 25 at 6:30 and May 26 at 6: "My Voyage to Italy" (†).
BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—May 22 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10 and May 23 at 7:15 and 9:10: "ABC Africa" (2002, Abbas Kiarostami; in Farsi and English). ♦ May 24-27 at 2: "Nelio's Story" (1998, Solveig Nordlund; in Portuguese and creole). ♦ May 24-28 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Sia, the Python's Dream" (2001, Dani Kouyaté; in French).
FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through June 6: "The Great American Comedy." May 22-23 at 1, 5:20, and 9:40: "The Women" (1939, George Cukor). ♦ May 22-23 at 3:25 and 7:45: "Adam's Rib" (1949, Cukor). ♦ May 24-25 at 1:30, 5:30, and 9:30: "Ninotchka" (†). ♦ May 24-25 at 3:35 and 7:35: "The Shop Around the Corner" (1940, Ernst Lubitsch). ♦ May 26 at 1, 4:20, and 7:40 and May 27 at 1:30 and 4:50: "Unfaithfully Yours" (†). ♦ May 26 at 3, 6:20, and 9:40 and May 27 at 3:30: "Christmas in July" (1940, Preston Sturges). ♦ May 27 at 7 and 8:45: "The Kid Brother" (1927, J. A. Howe). ♦ May 28 at 1, 4:30, and 8: "Vaudevillians on Vitaphone," early shorts. ♦ May 28 at 3, 6:30, and 10: "Palmy Days" (1931, Edward Sutherland).
FLORENCE GOULD HALL
55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—The films of Bertrand Blier. May 28 at 12:30, 4, and 7:30: "Hitler . . . Never Heard of Him" (1963; in French without subtitles).
THALIA THEATRE
2537 Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—Classic French cinema. The 1 P.M. screenings are double features. May 25-26 at 1: "Grand Illusion" (1937, Jean Renoir). ♦ May 25-26 at 3:15: "Hiroshima Mon Amour" (1959, Alain Resnais). ♦ May 25-26 at 6: "The Sorrow and the Pity" (1971, Marcel Ophüls).
WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through May 30: "Malcolm McDowell: Insolent Angel." May 22 at 2 and May 27 at 3:30: "Figures in a Landscape" (1970, Joseph Losey). ♦ May 22 at 4 and May 27 at 5:30: "Time After Time" (1979, Nicolas Meyer). ♦ May 22 at 6:30 and May 27 at 1: "If . . ." (1968, Lindsay Anderson). ♦ May 22 at 9 and May 25 at 1:30: "The Collection" (1976, Michael Apted). ♦ May 23 at 8 and May 28 at 1: "Gangster No. 1" (2000, Paul McGuigan). ♦ May 24 at 1:30 and 9: "Raging Moon" (1971, Brian Forbes). ♦ May 24 at 3:45 and May 26 at 9:15: "Cat People" (1982, Paul Schrader). ♦ May 24 at 6:30 and May 26 at 1: "Assassin of the Tsar" (1991, Karen Shakhnazarov). ♦ May 25 at 4: "O Lucky Man!" (1973, Anderson). ♦ May 25 at 8 and May 26 at 3:30: "A Clockwork Orange" (1971, Stanley Kubrick). ♦ May 26 at 7: "Get Crazy" (1983, Allan Arkush). ♦ May 27 at 8: "Caligula" (1979, Bob Guccione and Tinto Brass). ♦ May 28 at 9: "Brittania Hospital" (1982, Anderson).

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When nineteenth-century naturalist John Muir recommended getting "close to nature's heart" to, as he put it, "wash your spirit clean," the world was a very different place. Yet today, when the morning's news brings anything but tranquility, the need for nature's solace and healing is keener than ever.

Two of the most popular ways overscheduled Americans accomplish respite and restoration are by repairing to the nearest links for a round or two of golf and by experimenting with both mind and body at some of the latest twenty-first century spas. Seemingly disparate, both pursuits can calm the senses and remedy frazzled nerves—whether it's putting birdies on the back nine of a serene golf course or spending the afternoon indulging in hot stone massage and flow yoga.

LIFE IN BALANCE

And, with the international proliferation of golf-and-spa resorts, vacationers now have a broad array of destinations (and special offers) to choose from. So, if you're looking to satisfy that craving for eighteen holes and a seaweed wrap, there's no better time than the present.

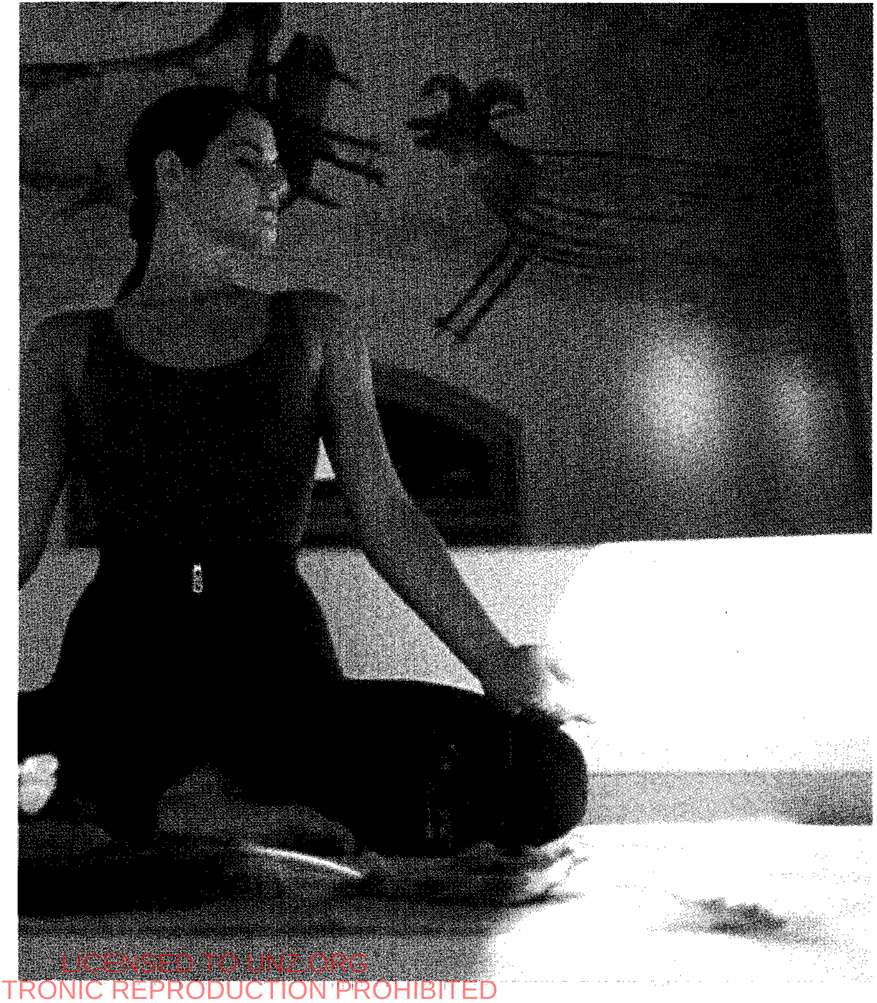
SYNERGY, SIMPLICITY

Where spas were once routinely based in facial and pedicure pamperings, today's spa denizens are seeking more of a connection between rejuvenation and lifestyle alternatives to combat stress. In search of a holistic approach to health, yoga and tai chi training, as well as Pilates, and yes, Yogalates, have been topping their preference lists. According to a recent Harvard study, seventy per cent of illnesses are stress-related. So based on their preventative appeal, it's not surprising that spas visits have increased (ninety-five million annually in the U.S.) and that the number of spas has doubled in the last five years. A five-billion-dollar industry, spas now generate more revenue than ski resorts.

Says Malcolm Abrams, editor in chief of *Spa Finder* magazine: "Attitudes toward spas have evolved. A spa is not necessarily seen as a place to go for a 'quick fix'; it's a

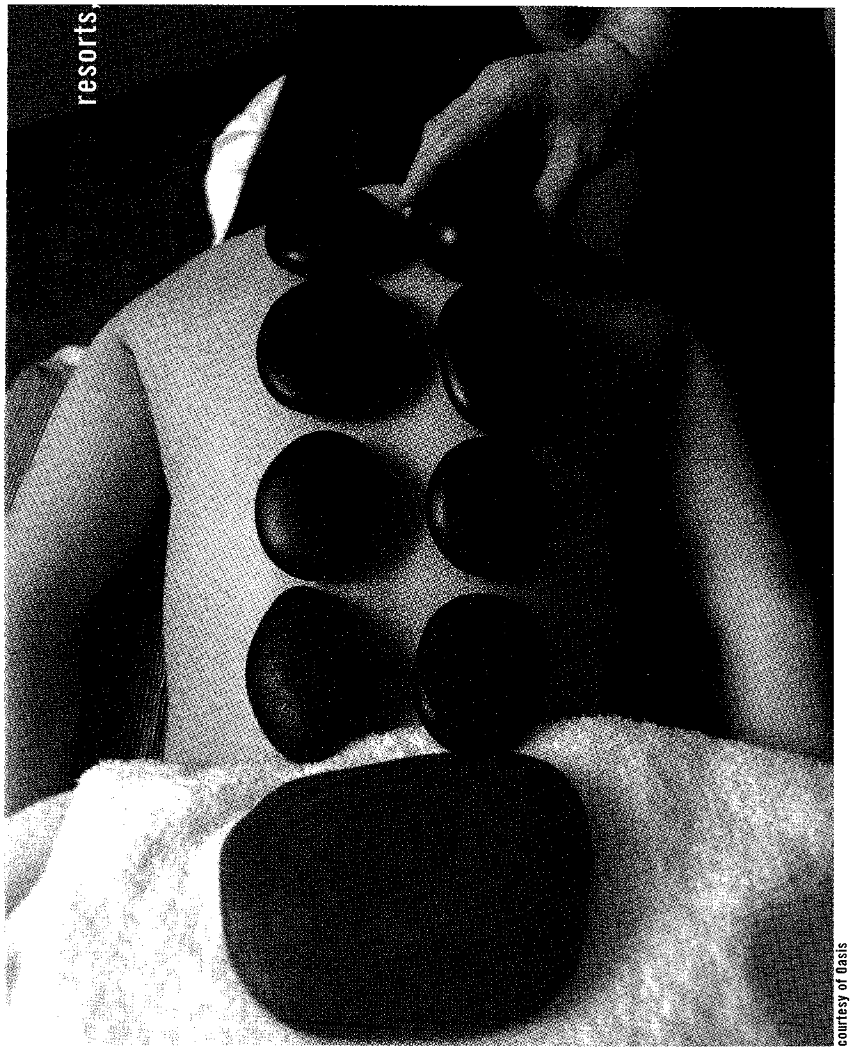
ASANA IN THE HIGHEST

More spas and resorts like Tecate's Rancho La Puerta are committing to restorative yoga programs.



courtesy of Rancho La Puerta

place where you can change your lifestyle—eat healthier, practice techniques for relaxation, perhaps add a spiritual dimension to your life."



courtesy of Oasis

STONE AGE THERAPY

Spas like New York's Oasis and California's Monterey Plaza indulge patrons with stone massage to release stress, and to promote balance and a sense of wholeness.

While destination spas have long included yoga classes, Abrams notes how programs have become increasingly sophisticated, and they often feature celebrated guest practitioners. Internationally renowned yoga instructor Rodney Yee notes that his invitations to teach at spas have increased five-fold over the last three years. Co-author of the new "Yoga: The Poetry of the Body" (Thomas Dunne Books), Yee claims that Western culture has gradually developed an appreciation of how yoga facilitates stress reduction. And the figures bear him out. It is estimated that approximately fifteen million Americans are practicing some form of yoga today. "Spas are a perfect environment for yoga," notes Yee, "because most of them are intimate and without distractions." Stellar examples include **The Shambhala Spa at Parrot Cay** in the Turks and Caicos Islands, which combines the spiritually based healing traditions of Asia like *pranayama* (yogic breath control) with natural sea and earth therapies. A view of the mountains and the Ganges from the former residence of the Maharaja of Tehri Garwal at **Ananda in the Himalayas** inspires neophytes and experts alike.

SPA TRENDING

As spas have competed for clientele, their range of services, facilities, and décor has evolved. One trend coming into favor is ethnic-themed spa treatments. Everything from the Javanese pre-wedding ritual to the Indian holistic philosophies of *ayurveda* and *siddha-vaidya* are integrated into spa regimens. Case in point: Las Vegas's **Aladdin Resort & Casino's** new Moroccan-inspired Elemis Spa incorporates rituals and ceremonies of relaxation that blend the influences of ten cultures—from Hawaiian *lomi-lomi* (rhythmic massage) to Chinese *tui na* (acupressure that manipulates muscle groups to capture the elusive energy of *qi* or *chi*). Therapies begin with a feet cleansing ritual to wipe away stress and a masseuse's hands "dance" on the flesh to awaken mind and body. The soft chime of mediation bells indicates when the session is over.

Growing numbers of medi-spas—dermatology and cosmetic-surgery practices that offer spa treatments—are also attracting devotees. Examples include the **Ojai Valley Inn & Spa** near Los Angeles and Wellmax at **La Quinta Resort and Spa** in Palm Springs. However, About.com spa guide Julie Register cautions consumers to be sure centers they are intending to visit have qualified, licensed practitioners performing medical services.

Later this month, at the spa at **Half Moon Golf, Tennis & Beach Club** in Jamaica's Montego Bay, New York plastic surgeon Z. Paul Lorenc will offer antiaging antidotes such as wrinkle-eradicating Botox and Restylane injections. Twice a year Lorenc also performs cosmetic surgery at a nearby fully accredited medical center, and patients can recuperate at one of Half Moon's secluded private villas, where an in-house staff insures maximum pampering.

BODY BUILDINGS

Says Lynne McNees, executive director of the International Spa Association, "Spas are no longer seen as a mere amenity. Today if you don't have one,

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Inside Information

Healing Waters Run Deep

While some Americans may still doubt the efficacy of natural remedies, Europeans have long turned to spas to alleviate a variety of ailments. On your next trip overseas, discover what it's like to immerse yourself in the healthful treatments offered at these European watering holes:

Austria A two-hour drive from Vienna, the ultra-modern Rogner-Bad Blumau spa makes the most of its thermal waters. A large swimming pool features man-made waves and whirlpools. Finnish and Swedish saunas, Turkish steam baths, and an aromatherapy grotto and beauty treatment tower also relax visitors.

Iceland In a shallow natural lava basin, the warm, milky, mineral-rich waters of the Blue Lagoon spa outside Reykjavík leech stress and ease skin ailments.

Ireland The Lodge and Spa at Inchydony Island in West Cork features a thalassotherapy center where heated sea water is used in several treatments. Arthritis sufferers and others maintain that health and vitality improve from a visit.

Switzerland In the Rhine Valley town of Bad Ragaz, containing Europe's largest Akrato (odorless) hot springs, bathers can soak in indoor and outdoor pools filled with the healing waters of Tamina Thermal Springs. Just south in the Tamina Gorge is Switzerland's oldest baroque spa, the Old Bad Pfäfers.

you're building one; if you do have one, you're expanding it." Architectural designs are also undergoing stylish transformations. New World Design Builders has reimagined the widely touted **Maximus Soho** spa in Manhattan's Tribeca. A two-story wall of falling water greets patrons at the spa's entrance and a mood-enhancing lighting system in which rooms change from tranquil to invigorating hues every few seconds prep clients for some of the best massages in Gotham.

Spas have also become an integral part of the design of new hotels, and many venerable institutions have been adding spa facilities. **The Ritz-Carlton** has been a leader in advancing the concept of in-hotel spas. Currently, it has thirteen spas in locales stretching from New Orleans and The Cayman Islands to Qatar on the Arabian Gulf. Within the next year nine more will open, and another dozen are currently under development.

courtesy of Maximus Soho

MOOD INDIGO

Kudos continue to pour in for Maximus Soho's "water journey" treatment that scrubs, steams, and moisturizes.

The new spas are being modeled after the chain's flagship spa at The Ritz-Carlton, Naples, on Florida's southwest coast. Opened in April 2000, the 51,000-square-foot salon is set in a Mediterranean-style mansion with a stunning view of the Gulf of Mexico. Daily yoga and Pilates classes are so popular that guests must make advance reservations. *Sanitas per aqua* ("health through water") facilities, from mineral baths to jacuzzis, are featured in all Ritz-Carlton spas.

Just outside Atlanta, treatments at the new The Ritz-Carlton Lodge, Reynolds Plantation are based on the Muskogee Creek Indians' reverence for the seasons, the elements, and all of the herbs, fruits, and flowers they yield. John Winterhawk, a spiritual leader of the Muskogee Creek tribe, participated in the development of authentic Indian treatments and products that are used exclusively at the resort. The spa's "wellness center" offers Bio-Terrain Analysis, a preventive-medicine assessment that measures various toxicity levels in the body.

The Waldorf-Astoria in midtown Manhattan will gladly line up pampering treatments either in the privacy of one's own room or at nearby

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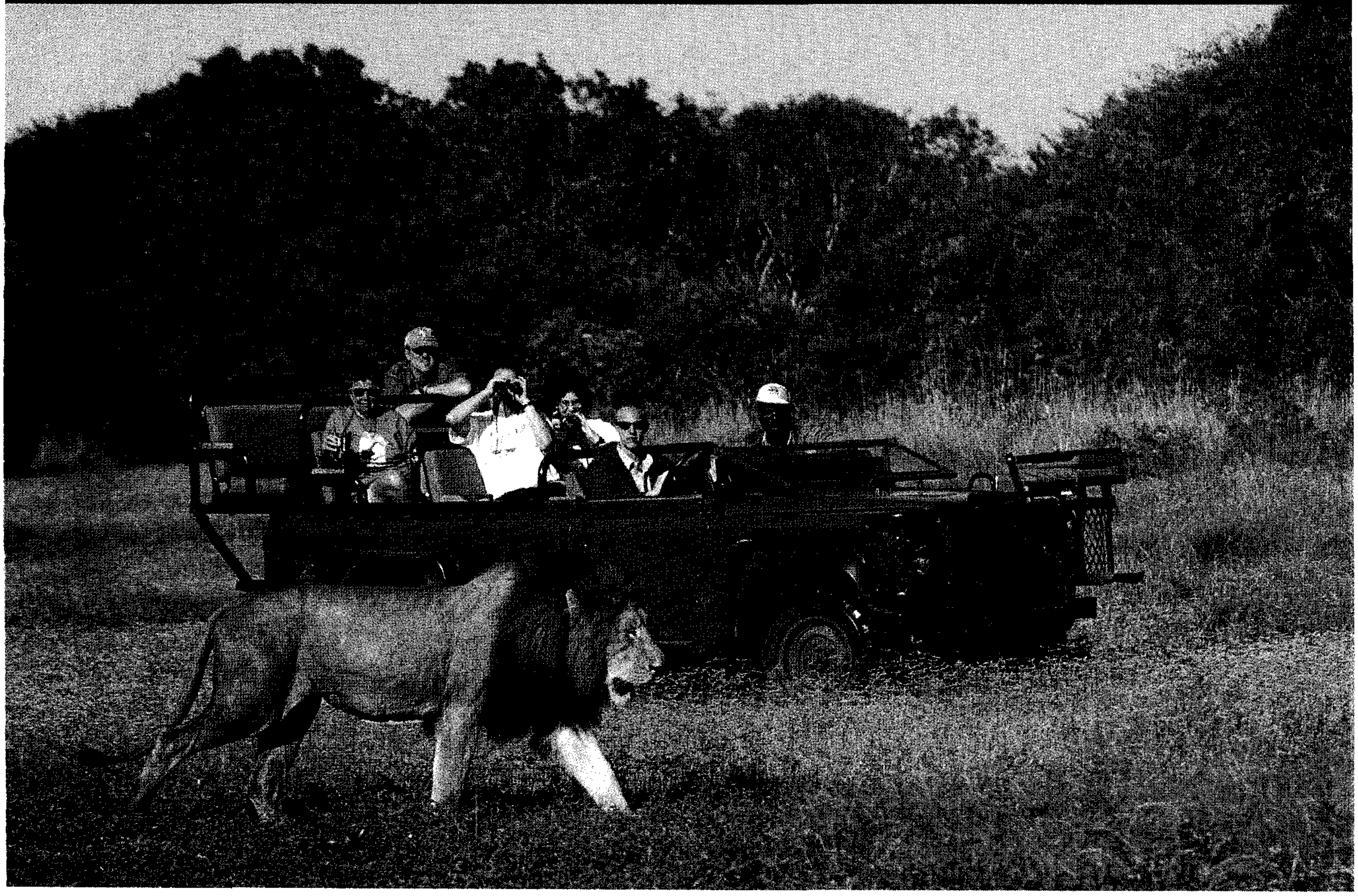

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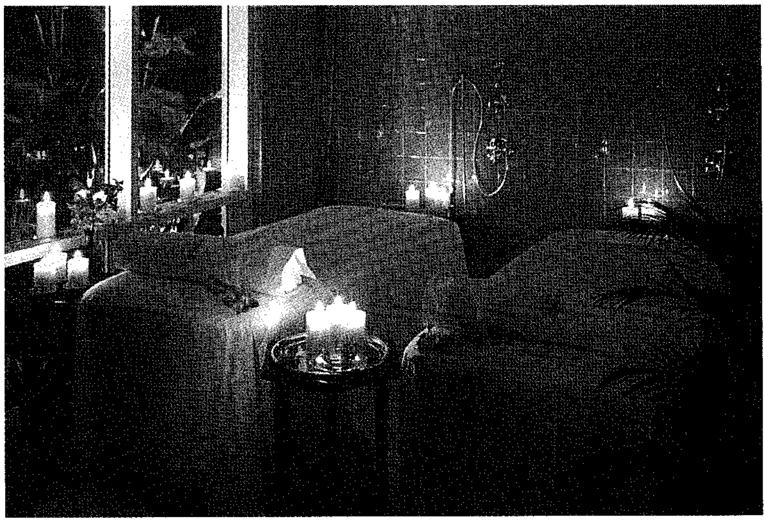
salons. "It's a frequent request," says Michael Romei, chief concierge of the hotel and **The Waldorf Towers**, adding, "We have a long list of talented people who make house calls for massages, pedicures, and manicures." For extended-stay guests, The Waldorf will arrange visits to distinguished health-resort spas outside the city: "One of our patrons once requested a massage on a Long Island beach," says Romei, "so we arranged a trip to Gurney's Inn Resort & Spa in Montauk." Midtown spas, such as **Juvenex**, which will debut early this summer, are near the venerable hotel. Open 24/7, Juvenex will feature Korean thermal treatments inside a jade igloo; a red-clay sauna; a glass, gem-shaped steam room; Japanese-style soaking tubs filled with sake or milk and honey; and an ancient Chinese remedy for PMS.

RENAISSANCE OF THE SPIRIT

Mexico, a country of compelling natural beauty and intense spirituality, provides the perfect setting in which to enjoy the mind-body renaissance. In fact, two remarkable destination spas are south of the border. World-renowned **Rancho La Puerta**, founded in Tecate in 1940, claims to be the oldest fitness spa in the western hemisphere. Its newest feature is a labyrinth, a spiralling path where guests practice walking meditation. Founder Deborah Szekely, upon reaching eighty, was inspired by personal life challenges and world events such as 9/11 to create a treatment aimed at energy renewal for the inner self. In the unique program introduced this spring, a small group of guests spends a week journaling, engaging in meditative practices like yoga and *tai chi ch'uan*, and taking workshops led by healing-arts celebrities.



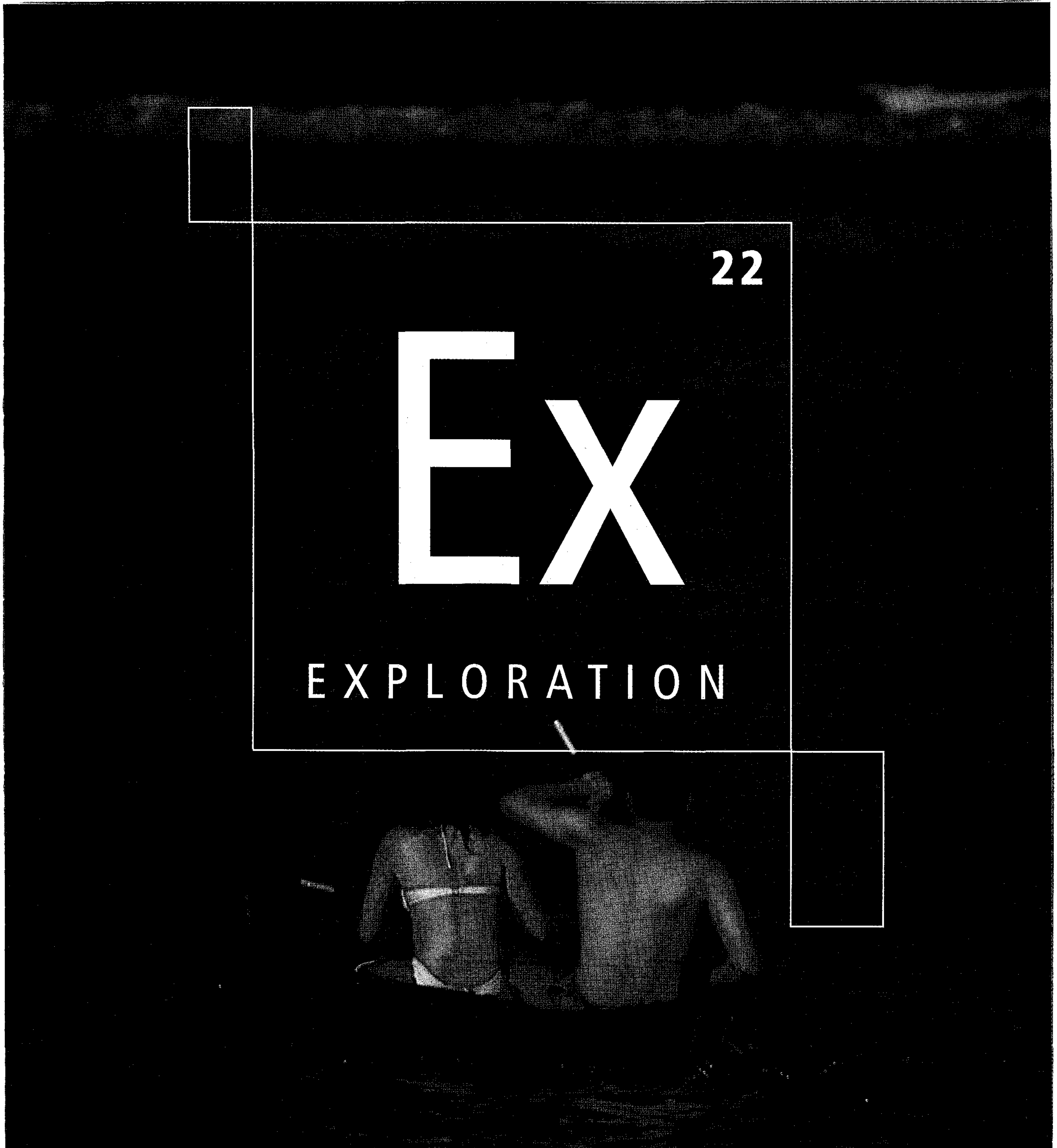
courtesy of The Ritz-Carlton

RITZY RITUALS

Signature treatments at The Ritz-Carlton, Rose Hall include Four Hands Massage that uses two therapists in unison.

Slated to open this summer, the **Spa at Esperanza** in Cabo San Lucas (on the Baja California peninsula) has taken inspiration from its arid desert setting, and will be incorporating nouvelle botanicals such as desert clay, lime, seaweed, and coconut into its signature treatments. Hydrotherapy will take place in an indoor steam cave, and alongside cascading waterfalls and outdoor pools. There will also be an on-premises yoga studio.

The U.S. Virgin Islands have long served as a breathtaking refuge for serenity-hungry visitors. The new **Self Centre at the Caneel Bay Resort** on St. John has added two new disciplines, Breathwalk and *M'ai Chi*. Developed by a yogi, Breathwalk combines an aerobic activity such as walking with *prana* yoga, a discipline for controlling the breath. A water-based aerobic workout, M'ai Chi integrates movements from *hatha* yoga (an



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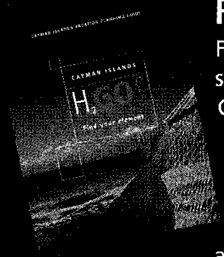

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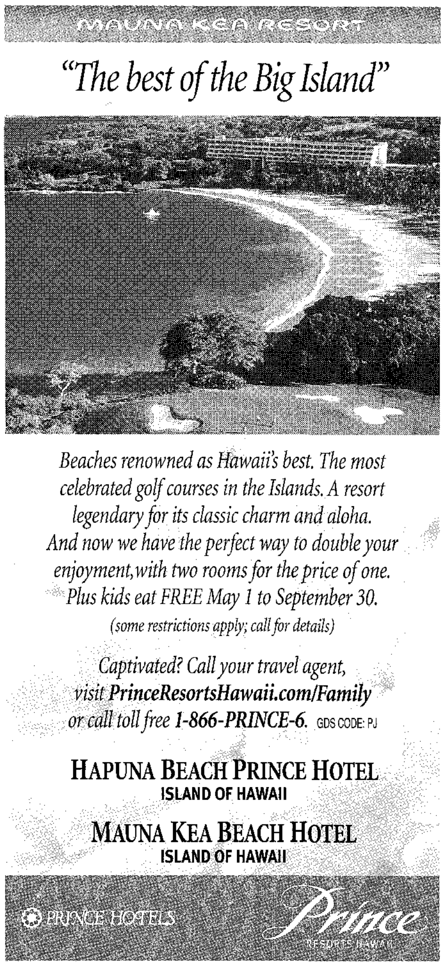
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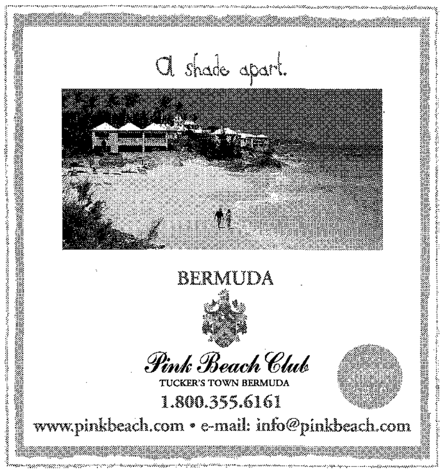
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HONG KONG'S MAN MO TEMPLE

Coils of incense hang from the ceiling of the nineteenth-century shrine, popular with both Buddhists and Daoists.

Indian discipline for developing the body through postures or *asanas*) and t'ai chi ch'uan (a Chinese practice that combines concentration, coordinated breathing, and slow, graceful body movements). The latest addition to U.S.V.I.'s spa services will open next month on St. Thomas. **Wyndham Sugar Bay Resort & Spa's** ten-thousand-square-foot center will offer unique treatments such as Caribbean Journey, a bath of coconut milk infused with pineapple and an aromatic essence. Sun worshippers can avail themselves of a soothing marine-based *nari* & algae gel wrap to rehydrate the skin.

While Grand Cayman is best known for its stellar diving reefs, the **Westin Casuarina Resort & Spa** is widely considered to be the top resort on Grand Cayman island. Set on the famed Seven Mile Beach, the Westin's new seven-thousand-square-foot Hibiscus Spa is The Cayman Islands' largest, and its only day spa opened to the public. A papaya body polish, a couples massage room, and hydrotherapy treatments that include Vichy showers and *effleurage*, a fingertip massage with long, slow, gliding strokes, round out the menu. Nearby, a new Ritz-Carlton resort is scheduled to open in late 2003 and will boast a prestigious Greg Norman-designed golf course.

WHOLE IN ONE

With spas offering a host of mind/body activities, it's not surprising that golf therapy has entered the mix. While golfing runs the risk of being an ego-bruiser, a round of eighteen holes played under par is guaranteed to rejuvenate body and soul. Since 1986, the number of golfers worldwide has grown by thirty-four per cent as men and women have pursued a game offering both challenge and companionship. Course-developing is on the upswing, with the number of links in the U.S. alone increasing by a third during the last fifteen years, according to the National Golf Foundation.

NEWS BRIEFS

Prince Resorts Hawaii has unveiled 99 Holes of Golf, a unique eight-day room-and-fairway package. Golfers lodge at its four properties on Maui, Oahu, and the Big Island, and tee up at its five scenic golf courses, including two designed by Arnold Palmer. . . . To complement its three superb golf courses, **Kingsmill Resort** in historic Williamsburg, VA has opened a new nineteenth-hole destination. Eagles, a steak-and-chops restaurant, specializes in meat that's been cold smoked with beechwood chips. . . . **Pink Beach Club & Cottages** has linked up with Riddells Bay Golf & Country Club, to offer a golf package that includes an ocean-view suite for two and two rounds per person on one of Bermuda's oldest and finest eighteen-hole courses. . . . **Poipu Kapili** resort in Kaua'i swings into a golfer's special through December 20th with five nights in an oceanfront condominium, a rental car, and reduced greens fees at Kiahuna Golf Club. . . . **Gurney's Inn Resort & Spa** in Montauk, Long Island is introducing guided European Thermalism therapy that begins with a thirty-minute eucalyptus-infused steam followed by an invigorating plunge into the Atlantic surf. . . . In celebration of its twentieth anniversary, **The Copperhood Inn & Spa** in New York's Catskill Mountains will discount spa treatments for *New Yorker* readers by fifteen per cent on weekdays throughout June. . . . **Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa** in Monterey, CA has added LaStone Therapy to its treatment menu. The unique massage technique uses a combination of marble and heated and cooled basalt riverbed stones for healing and relaxation. . . . Those signing on to **Cross-Culture's** group tour "The Danube and Beyond: World Heritage Sites in Hungary, Slovakia, and Poland" (July 25-August 5) can use their free time in Budapest to soak in the city's architecturally exquisite thermal baths. . . . Exercise your intellect at Jamaica's **Calabash International Literary Festival** (May 24-26) to be held at Jake's Village resort on the island's untamed southern coast. Calabash, which showcases emerging as well as award-winning wordsmiths, is the only annual literary festival in the Caribbean.

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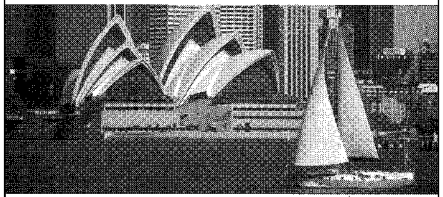

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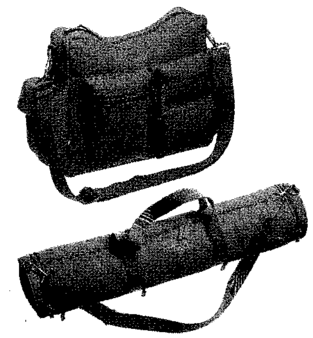
"At some of the spas that have courses, resident pros really work with golfers to help them play with a more relaxed, less competitive attitude," says *Spa Finder's* Abrams. **The PGA Village** in Port St. Lucie, Florida, as well as **The Phoenician** in Scottsdale, Arizona, are two resorts where golf and spa programs work in harmony to make the golfing experience more pleasurable.

In the February 2002 issue of *Golf Magazine*, America's best golf destinations were identified by the magazine's readership. One of the cited resorts was the recently upgraded **Cloister**, on Sea Island, part of Georgia's Golden Isles. The Sea Island Golf Club offers duffers and pros three courses designed by Rees Jones, Tom Fazio, and Davis Love III. **The Lodge** is a forty-seven-million-dollar, forty-room stone-and-shingle property that opened on nearby St. Simon's Island in March 2001, where twenty-four hour butler service is available on each floor. Also noted by *Golf Magazine* readers was the nearly six-million-dollar renovation of Hawaii's **Kaua'i Marriott Resort** that is adjacent to Kaua'i Lagoons Golf & Racquet Club and its two Jack Nicklaus-designed courses.

South Africa is an increasingly popular golf destination. Golf writer Scott Gummer says, "Most golf in South Africa is played on the Garden Route—between the Indian Ocean and the Outeniqua Mountains. Like in Palm Springs, you are playing hard up against the mountains, but here you also have an incredible ocean vista. Plus, it is simply impossible to spend more than fifty dollars on greens fees. It's an unbelievable value." Ernie Els, fourth-ranked pro golfer and South African native, says that one of his favorite courses is at the **Fancourt Hotel & Country Club** near the charming town of George. Fancourt is currently spiffing up its links in anticipation of the 2003 President's Cup, the prestigious event that pits the top twelve American pro golfers against their counterparts from non-European nations.

Wales has more than two hundred reasonably priced courses to choose from. After an invigorating jaunt along the breathtaking fairways, one requires equally formidable lodgings to retreat to. **St. David's Hotel & Spa**, set on the recently



MEDITATION TO GO.

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3. Contestants may submit one (1) entry per household. All entries must be received by August 26, 2002. All submitted entries become the property of The Condé Nast Publications "Sponsor" and will not be acknowledged or returned.
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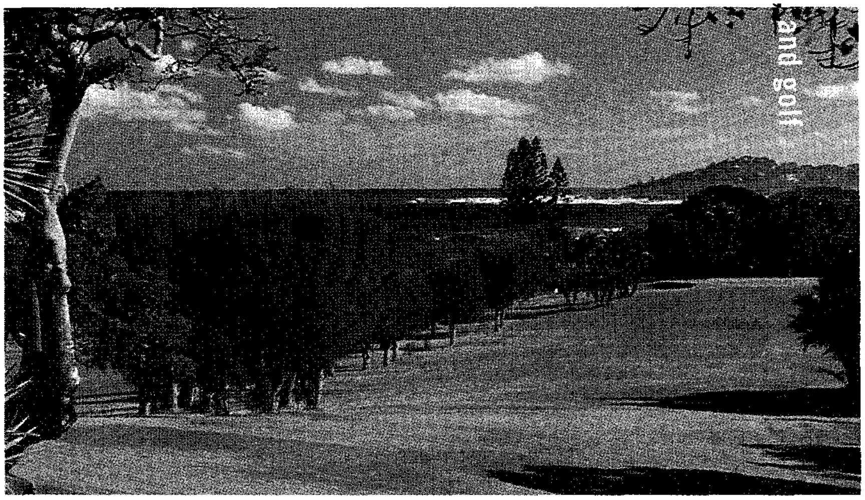
10. For name of winner, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the "Itinerary: Resorts, Spas, and Golf" Great Giveaways Sweepstakes Winner, *The New Yorker* Merchandising Department, 4 Times Square, 21st floor, New York, NY 10036 after August 28, 2002.

revitalized bay front in Cardiff, is a lovely, five-star hotel with peerless service and a spa that focuses on water therapy. Featuring a unique hydropool with massaging fountains and currents for guests to wade through, the spa has a full menu of seaweed treatments as well.

This year, the 34th Ryder Cup, partially sponsored by British Airways/BA.com, where the top U.S. players square off against the U.K.'s finest, will take place in England at DeVere Belfry in Sutton Coldfield (September 27-29). **Celtic Manor Resort** near Newport, Wales has won its bid as the site of the 2010 Ryder Cup. The event will mark the first time that this "holiest" of golf events is held on Welsh soil. Celtic Manor has fourteen hundred acres, three championship golf courses, a five-star hotel, four restaurants, and the Forum spa. Under a hand-painted starry sky, its bath seats fifty and is the largest in Europe.

Stateside, North Carolina's **Pinehurst Resort & Country Club** will host the U.S. Open in 2005, and by that time it will have added two new links—one designed by Rees Jones and the other by Jack Nicklaus—to its eight, world-class courses. To accommodate its golf-and-spa champions, Pinehurst recently invested twelve million dollars in a spiffy new spa, so that a glorious day on the fairways can be rewarded by a full measure of well-deserved pampering.

(Laura J. Vogel, Susan Breslow Sardone,
and Dan Ouellette contributed to this supplement.)



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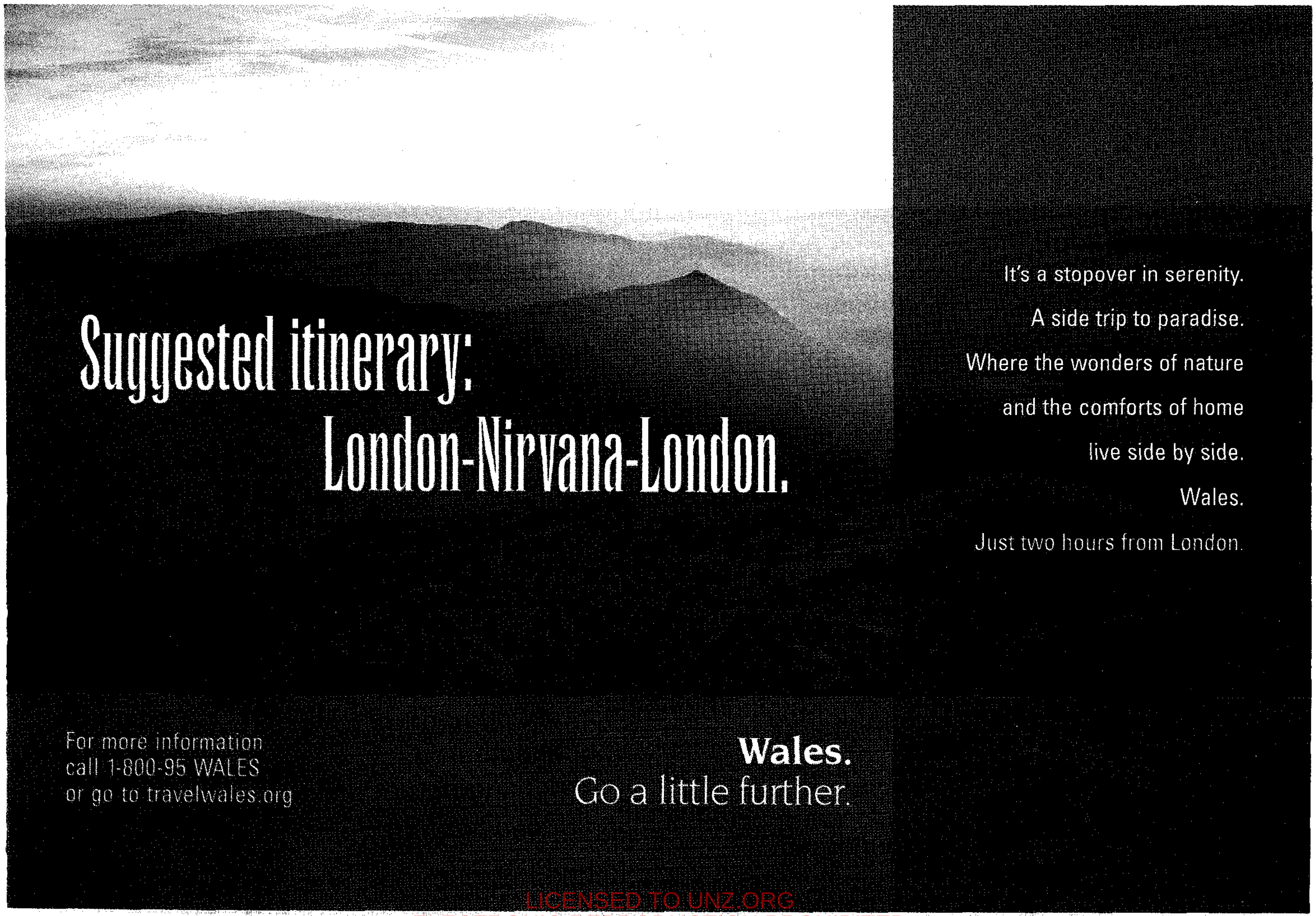
FAIREST OF THE FAIRWAYS

The new Links course at South Africa's Fancourt will host the 2003 President's Cup.



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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
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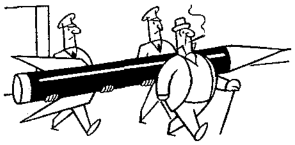
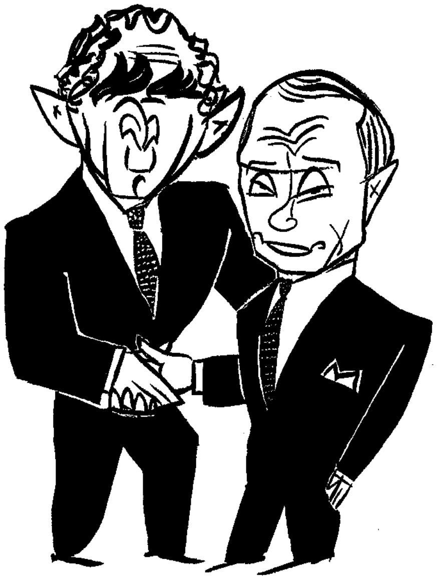


Reykjavik—ring a bell? The capital of Iceland, and the site of one of the gaudiest missed opportunities of the twentieth century. Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev went there in October of 1986 for a long weekend, and in an exhilarating game of "Can You Top This?" they decided (to the horror of many of their aides) to cut their strategic nuclear arsenals in half, and then to dismantle their entire inventories of ballistic missiles, and then, what the hell, to get rid of all their nuclear weapons—every single one!—by 1996. And then the whole agreement collapsed, on account of missile defense. Reagan wanted it; Gorbachev didn't. But missile defense was nothing. It did not exist in 1986, it did not exist in 1996, and it does not exist in 2002. If Reagan was foolish to insist on it, Gorbachev was even more foolish to insist on rejecting it. After the Reykjavik letdown, relations rapidly warmed up anyway. But a singular, unrepeatable chance to cut the nuclear Gordian knot had been lost.

Reykjavik was full of diplomats again last week, for the announcement of a new, rather hazy arrangement whereby, as the *Times* put it, "Russia will for the first time become an equal partner at the table for discussions and actions with the nineteen NATO members on a variety of issues." And this week, in Moscow, Presidents Bush and Putin will sign a treaty committing their countries, by the end of 2012, to reducing deployments of strategic—that is, intercontinental—nuclear weapons from about six thousand on a side to between seventeen hundred and twenty-two hundred. Jack Straw, the British Foreign Secretary, pronounced the Cold War "kaput" and called the new Reykjavik agreement its funeral. And the arms deal, Bush said, "will liquidate the legacy of the Cold War."

Great. But hang on—wasn't the Cold War supposed to have ended quite some time ago? Isn't it a little late to be making funeral arrangements, if a funeral (albeit a jolly one) is really what's happening in Moscow? Actually, the Bush-Putin treaty looks more like intensive care than embalming. Politically, yes, the Cold War is over. Militarily, though, the zombie still walks. Why on earth do Russia and America need thousands of doomsday weapons, if not to threaten each other? For purposes of simple deterrence, wouldn't a couple of hundred be more than enough? China, the only other country that could plausibly pose a strategic threat to either, has an intercontinental nuclear force estimated at thirty-two missiles.



The good news is that the world is a much, much safer place than anyone could have imagined twenty years ago, in one overwhelming way: the danger of global annihilation has almost completely subsided. (In 1982, Andropov succeeded Brezhnev, the arms race was in overdrive, and the Soviet-American standoff was universally assumed to be, for all practical purposes, permanent.) The bad news is that the world is much less safe than reasonable people ten or twelve years ago had every right to hope it would be by now, and not only because of September 11th. By the same token, this arms treaty is better than might have been anticipated from the diplomatic, or undiplomatic, behavior of the Bush Administration over the past year and a half, mainly because the alternative was no treaty at all. It offers Putin a bit of inexpensive (not to say cheap) prestige, and there is a slight gain for both sides in predictability and stability, qualities esteemed by the military. (In the Bush

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

Administration, the ideological opposition to arms control does not come from military officers, whether present or, like Secretary of State Powell, former. It comes from neoconservative intellectuals, very few of whom are familiar with the smell of napalm in the morning.) This treaty is better than nothing, but that's about all it's better than. It is worse, for example, than START II, which the father of the present President Bush signed in 1993. Under START II, which never took effect, the cuts would have been faster and would have included all land-based multiple-warhead missiles, which nuclear strategists consider to be especially destabilizing. From the Russian point of view, this is also a worse deal than the one that was offered by the Clinton Administration. That deal envisioned similar arms cuts. In addition, it would have preserved a modified version of the ABM treaty, which Bush has since scrapped altogether; specified a detailed timetable and a new inspection regime; and required the actual destruction of warheads and delivery systems, which under the present treaty can be put in storage. Putin turned Clinton down—the same mistake, in miniature, that Gorbachev made when he spurned Reagan in Reykjavik.

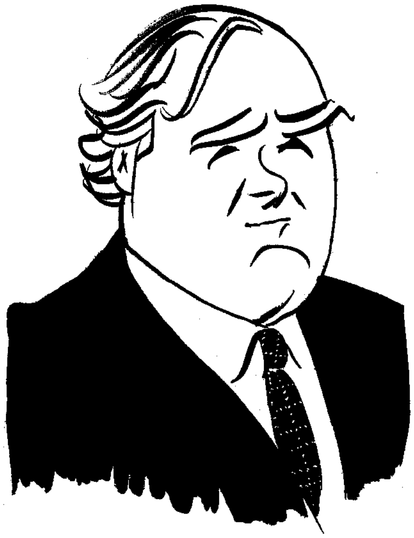
The fact that the Bush Administration's only important concession was to make the agreement a legally binding treaty has been portrayed as a victory. But if Russia is now a friend fit for the councils of NATO, then victory is a strange boast. A worse deal for Russia doesn't mean a better deal for us. The threat we face, as we learned anew on September 11th, is not the sort of large-scale nuclear exchange that the strategy industry has been worrying about for the past fifty years. It's a madman who gets hold of a nuclear device and "delivers" it, not atop a missile but in a truck or an airplane or a yacht. Homeland defense is what Bush's strategic policy does little or nothing to advance. In some ways it does less than nothing, because it forgoes a chance to greatly reduce the supply of Russian nuclear-weapon materials at risk of falling into evil hands. "Fail-Safe" is on DVD, but "The Sum of All Fears" is coming to your neighborhood theatre.

Nor does Russia's new arrangement with NATO seem to be quite the breakthrough it is being hailed as. The old consultative body was called the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council; its membership was described as "nineteen plus one." The new body is to be called the NATO-Russia Council, and it will meet "at twenty," which sounds cozier. Whatever the arithmetic, the important decisions will still be made elsewhere. Well, never mind. Bush is going to Russia, and he thinks he has a rapport with Putin, and a treaty will be not only signed but (as probably would not have been possible under Clinton) ratified. All this suggests a glimmer of glum hope that the sway of the neoconservative Strangeloves is not quite total. It's not much of a hope, but it's better than nothing.

—*Hendrik Hertzberg*

THE BENCH
COUNTRY-CLUB COURTROOM

The atmosphere around the trial of Michael Skakel last week was curiously genteel. Skakel, of course, is the so-called Kennedy cousin (actually, he is Ethel Kennedy's nephew) who is charged with murdering his friend Martha Moxley with a golf club in 1975, when they were both fifteen. Judge John Kavanewsky is presiding over the case, in a spacious courtroom in Norwalk, Connecticut, a dozen or so miles up I-95 from the scene of the murder, in Greenwich. The victim's mother, Dorthy Moxley, who was the first witness on the stand, set the tone. When she was asked by the prosecutor, Jonathan Benedict, to identify the defendant, Moxley demurred, saying, "I hate to point."



Michael Skakel

The jury probably understood her reluctance. The twelve jurors and four alternates appear to have been recruited from a Cheever story—all white, all prosperous-looking, with the women favoring pearls and sweater sets and the men going for chinos or golf togs. They listened attentively as Benedict delivered an opening statement that was long on courtesy but short on incriminating evidence. The prosecutor didn't do anything as gauche as point at the defendant, either, and he didn't even mention Skakel's name until he was well into his remarks.

The tremendous gap in time between the crime and the trial made for a peculiar presentation. The murder took place on the night before Halloween—mischief night—and several local teen-agers had gathered at the Skakels' house. Now, however, the witnesses to the night's events are mostly in their forties, and they recited their tales of sneaking beers and beating curfews with a melancholy air. Even Martha's older brother, John Moxley, who today is a slight and balding commercial-real-estate broker, had to smile when he said where he was when he learned of his sister's death: football practice.

Much of last week's testimony had little to do with the defendant. Instead, it concerned Kenneth Littleton, the private tutor who had been hired to assist the seven Skakel children; he had the bad luck to have taken up his new job on the day of the murder. Testifying in a robotic monotone, Littleton related how he himself had long been a major suspect in the case—a suspicion that helped send his life "down the tubes." Mental illness, alcoholism, and various arrests followed, all of which he described in a rich detail that contrasted with his flat affect. For example, in 1982, when the Florida police stopped Littleton on charges of drunken and disorderly conduct, he was reciting portions of John F. Kennedy's "*Ich bin ein Berliner*" speech, and he identified himself as "Kenny Kennedy," the "black sheep" of the family. Around that time, he told the court, he was drinking "fifteen tequila sunrises a day, with a heavy-handed bartender."

Littleton's ex-wife, Mary Baker, took

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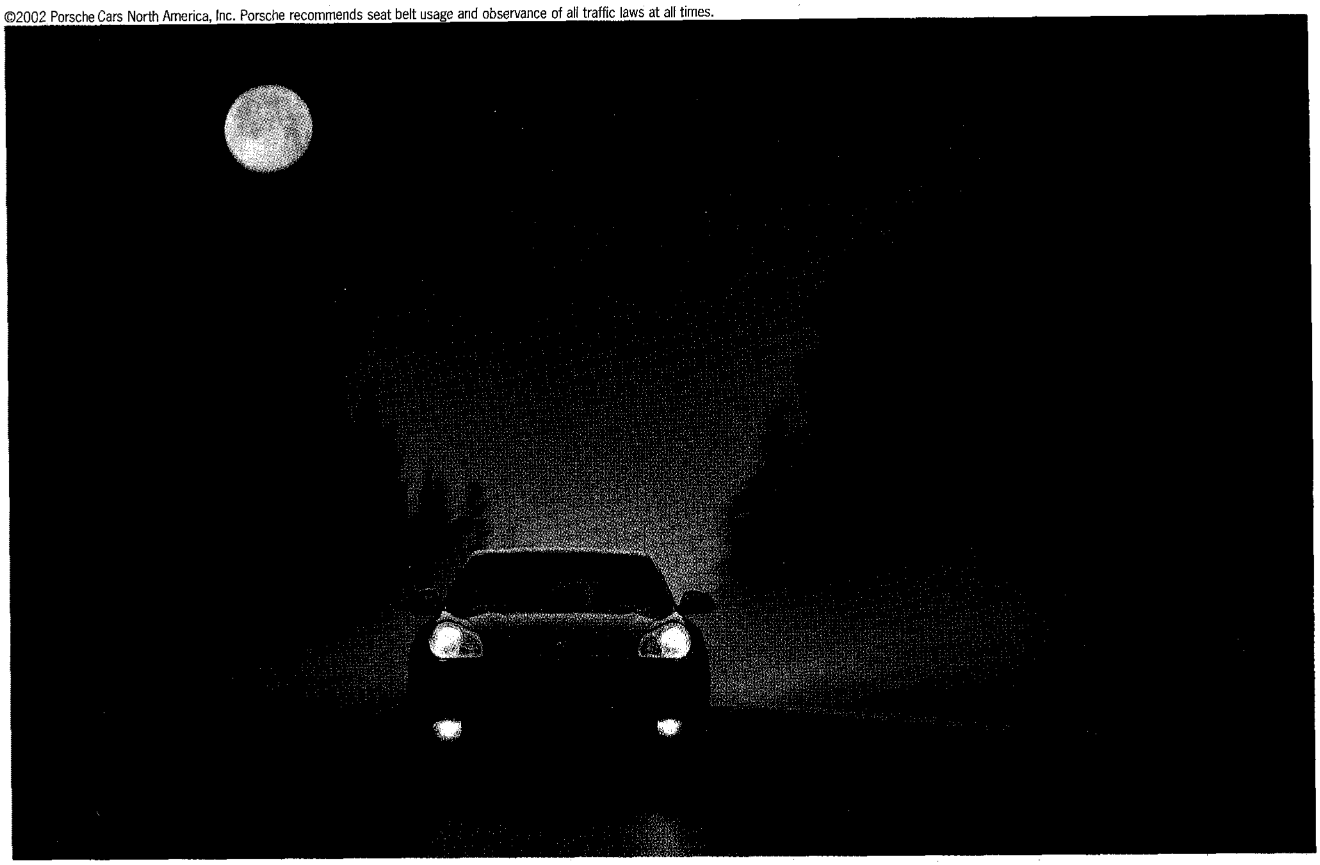

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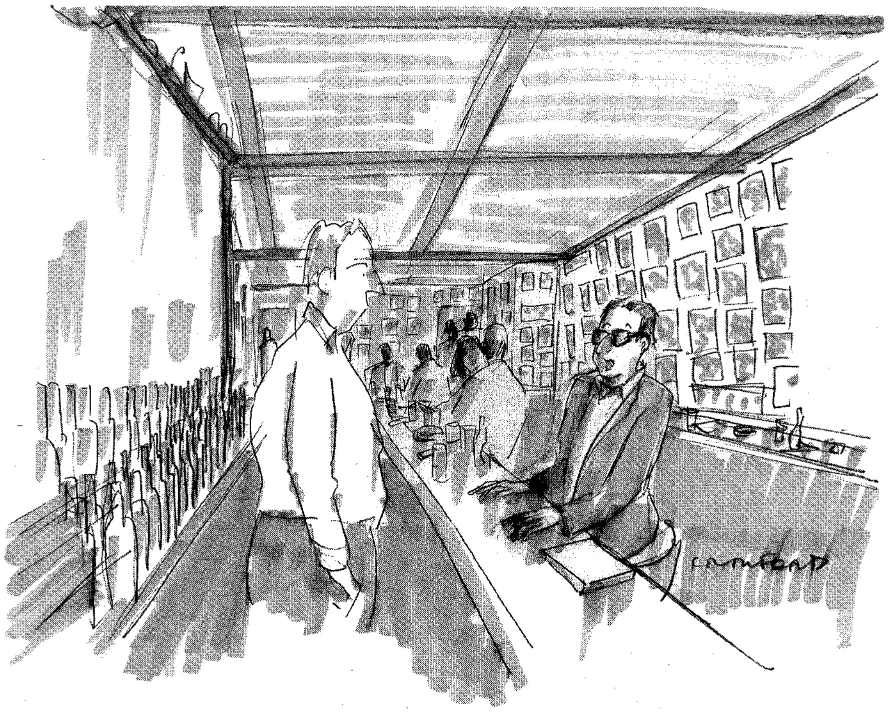

"An everything Martini, please."

• •

the stand to describe how, at the direction of the police, she secretly tape-recorded numerous conversations with him. Several times over the years, Littleton denied any role in the murder, although he did concede that at one point he believed he had confessed to the crime. Baker said that the strain of the Moxley investigation once drove Littleton to contemplate suicide. "He told me that he was going to swim out in the ocean and get eaten by sharks," she testified.

The prosecution's best evidence last week may have come courtesy of that archetype of suburban life—the family dog. Early testimony suggested that several dogs in the neighborhood, including one belonging to the Ix family, had barked around the time of the murder. Cissy Ix testified that on the day of Martha Moxley's funeral she held a reception for the girl's friends. Ix said that she was struck by the behavior of Zok, her Australian sheepdog, as he sniffed the guests, including Michael Skakel and his brother Thomas, another onetime suspect in the case. "As to Tommy, the dog was fine, and there was no problem whatsoever, but Michael couldn't even come in a door," Ix testified. "The dog growled at him." On cross-examination, however, Ix admitted that Michael and Zok had had a tempestuous relationship even before the murder, because the boy liked to shoot his BB gun at the animal and throw apples at him. Besides, she added, "the dog barked at everyone. We were the only ones who really loved him."

—*Jeffrey Toobin*

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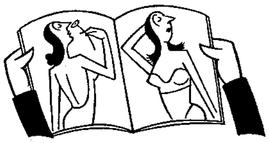
THE GIRLS OF PRINCETON

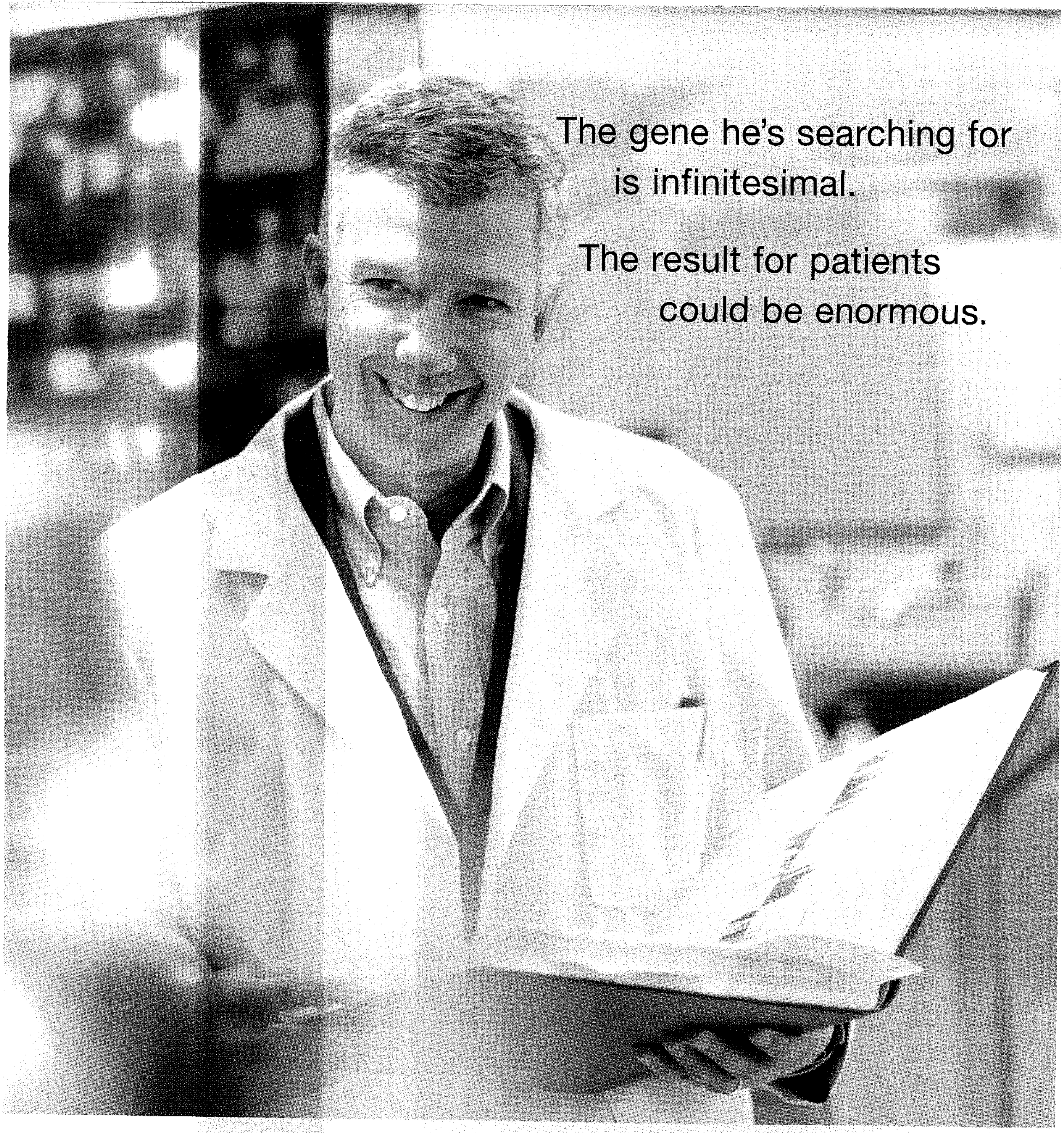


It is something of a tradition at Princeton, as elsewhere, for men to make lists of women. In "This Side of Paradise," Amory Blaine is asked by a roommate about the girls who send him letters, and Amory, as Fitzgerald put it, "named them off": "There's Marylyn DeWitt—she's pretty, got a car of her own and that's damn convenient; there's Sally Weatherby—she's getting too fat; there's Myra St. Claire, she's an old flame, easy to kiss if you like it." These were Minnesota flames. There were no women at Princeton when Amory was there, just before the First World War, but the advent of coeducation, in 1969, insured a vigorous samizdat of unrequited enthusiasm: names upon names of girls—written on bathroom walls or the fringes of lecture notes, uttered in bull sessions and bong sessions—across from whom the men of Princeton would like to sit in class.

But two weeks ago the *Nassau Weekly*, a student paper that plays the foil to the *Princetonian*, the school's drab daily, converted those yearnings into journalism, of a kind, with its final edition of the school year—the self-proclaimed "Super-Controversial Top Ten Issue." From an anonymous survey of about a hundred male undergraduates, two of the paper's three editors-in-chief, Adam Nemett and Alex Rosenfeld, derived a list and an article: "The Girls of Princeton: Our Ten Most Beautiful Girls." The four-page spread featured photo portraits, ardent appreciations, and brief Q. & A.s (all ten most beautiful girls coöperated, though three other most beautiful girls had declined). "There are a lot of guys on this campus who you'll find endlessly complaining about the dearth of attractive Princeton girls," Nemett and Rosenfeld wrote. "These guys are idiots, and here's proof."

The women are certainly handsome. The poses are demure. The profiles are delivered without irony, with nods to inner beauty and the perils of undereating, and recollections of lame pickup lines ("Do you want to go home and have sex?"). Some of the names are startling: there's a Vail Bloom ("NW: What makes a person beautiful? VB: Passion. I would say that's the key quality. And uniqueness"), a Penelope Tang ("My life is kind of my art"), and a Coco Stiff ("It's just like a natural reaction, like a second grade kind of mentality, you know, to go back and be like making a list"). The lone freshman, Mariana Fraga ("I love the grad students"), is pictured perched on Henry Moore's outdoor sculpture "Oval with Points." Milano Miodini, a senior, who is moving to California after graduation to be a Hollywood agent, cites as the most romantic spot on campus a nook "by the refrigerators" in the Tiger Inn, a beery eating club. Her roommate, Jacqui Neiss, talks about using her looks to get what she wants: "Like last night I'm desperately out of cigarettes, running around, and I'm like, 'Hi, random guy, can you give me a cigarette?' "

Needless to say, this package did not


The gene he's searching for is infinitesimal.
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Dr. Lee Babiss,
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reach print without controversy. Princeton may be conservative, compared with, say, Swarthmore, but it is college. In the weeks before publication, word of the "Top Ten" piece got around, in large part because the staff of the *Nass*, as it is known, was divided. Several editors, male and female, objected strongly to the idea, maintaining that it was demeaning to women, that it would exacerbate the eating-disorder epidemic, and, above all, that it would compromise the integrity, such as it is, of the *Nass*. (The *Nass* was founded in 1979, and is delivered free to dormitories and eating clubs. Generally, it is thin but keen gruel.) The editors embarked on a long and spirited e-mail debate. Various suggestions for accompanying pieces that would mitigate the article's offensiveness—"Top Ten Male Sluts"—were shot down.

"I don't necessarily agree that it's misogynist," Rosenfeld wrote in one e-mail, "but I'll certainly admit to it being puerile."

"I have always held you to be a professional, sensitive, receptive human being in person. I am sorry if I have been wrong," the publisher, Kristina Witt, wrote back later.

Before long, the *Princetonian* caught wind of the controversy. On April 26th, it reported, "NASSAU WEEKLY FUTURE IN DOUBT AS EDITORIAL STAFF RESIGNS EN MASSE," citing mutiny over the proposed "Top Ten." Sadly for the *Prince*, the *Nass* wasn't closing. Its editors, who couldn't agree on whether or not to do the "Top Ten," had banded together to put one over on their rival. Three days later, the *Princetonian* reported, " 'NASS' OBSCURED STAFF TURMOIL WITH DECEIT."

By the time the "Super-Controversial Top Ten Issue" came out, on May 9th, everyone was ready for it. The "Top Ten" spread was padded by the editors' e-mail debate, a half-page statement from the Organization of Women Leaders, and a quick list, sans photos, of "Talented Senior Women: A Different Top Ten."

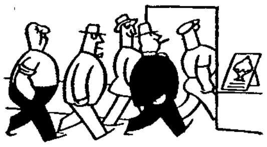
"My objections remain," Witt said the other day.

Not so the honorees. "I was flattered," Jacqui Neiss said. Milano Miodini said she'd been getting pats on the back: " 'Hey hey, Top Ten.' " As for Mariana Fraga, the freshman, she's been out with Adam Nemett, the co-author, a couple of times.

Informed of this, Witt said, "I asked Adam and Alex at the beginning whether this was a ploy to meet beautiful women. And I thought I was joking."

—*Nick Paumgarten*

FREE LUNCH DEPT.
THE MAGIC BASEMENT



Since the middle of the nineteen-thirties, the city's best sleight-of-hand men have been getting together every Saturday afternoon at one restaurant or another to talk shop and hone the niceties of their craft. For the past twenty years or so, their hangout has been the back room of Reuben's Deli, at Thirty-eighth Street and Madison Avenue. If you wanted to learn how to deal from the bottom of the deck, hear what the former chairman of Bear Stearns had to say about Thumb Tips, or receive a critique of your Zarrow Shuffle from Herb Zarrow himself, Reuben's was the place. Then, last December, the Department of Health, citing extensive insanitary conditions, ordered Reuben's to close up shop, and the magicians lost their clubhouse.

"It was devastating," Oscar Weigle, an eighty-three-year-old retired editor, said the other day. "They had lots of tables, a back room, they didn't have a lot of business—it was perfect."

For a while, an unpopular pizza parlor on West Thirty-fifth Street looked like a possible replacement, but the magicians' presence created an illusion of prosperity that started to attract actual customers, and it got too crowded. A few months ago, Doug Edwards, whose card tricks have been collected in a book called "Doug Edwards Packs a Wallop," ran into his friend Al Louie, who mentioned that his sister-in-law, Christine Fong, had recently become a partner in Maui Tacos, a fast-food place near the Empire State Building. They decided to drop by and say hello.

At one point, Edwards went to look for the men's room and found himself in the basement, in what is called the Surfers Dining Room. "As soon as I saw the setup, I said, 'Wow!' " he recalled.

On the face of it, the new venue bears no resemblance to its predecessor. Reuben's motto was "From a Sandwich to an Institution," and its signature dish was the sandwich that bears its name; Maui Tacos' motto is "Mexican with Mauitude," and its featured special is the "Wet" Boogie Board and Hard Beef Taco combo. The back room at Reuben's was indifferently decorated and shopworn; Maui Tacos' basement has been refinished in distressed wood and corrugated metal to suggest a beach shack. Nevertheless, Maui Tacos provides the same essential ingredients that made Reuben's so beloved: tables, privacy (most customers prefer to eat upstairs, where there are windows), and distance from the cash register. Maui Tacos also has a self-serve soda fountain (free refills) and two wall-mounted television sets hooked up to a VCR to allow for the study of instructional videos.

On a recent Saturday afternoon, a couple of dozen regulars gathered around the tables in the restaurant's basement, showing one another new moves, discussing mutual acquaintances ("For a memory expert, his memory's not so hot"), and bad-mouthing Ricky Jay. (One of them claimed that he saw Jay, at one of the group's gatherings in the late sixties, wadding multiple slices of white bread into a single large ball and eating it—though Jay denies ever having had anything to do with them.) A few guys said they missed Reuben's, but conceded that they might in fact have hastened its demise: nobody ever ordered anything. "Not only that," Jerry Wiesenberg, the president of the International Brotherhood of Magicians' New York ring, said. "They would actually bring in food from the outside."

Toward the end of the afternoon, Christine Fong came down to mingle with her unofficial tenants. "You changed your chips—they're better," Brian Higgins, a thirty-three-year-old plumber and card man, told her. "They have kind of a potato-chip feel now." Fong, who took over the restaurant with her partner a few weeks after September 11th, said that business was slow at first but has been picking up. She hopes that the magicians will be a draw. "Maybe some of my customers can go down to participate in the magic," she said. A group of lanky teen-agers in baggy clothes and baseball caps came down the stairs in search of a table. Doug Edwards looked at them and said, "Whoa—what's going on here?"

—*Adam Green*

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THE FINANCIAL PAGE

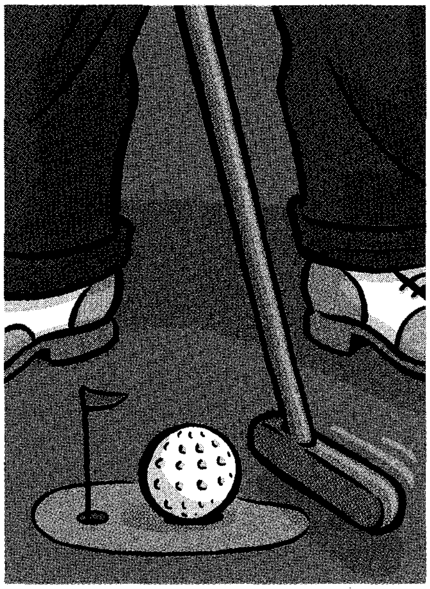
THE GOLDILOCKS EFFECT

JetBlue is different from other airlines. It doesn't issue paper tickets. Its planes have leather seats and DirecTV. It serves no meals. It flies out of airports that the major airlines shun, like Long Beach. The most important difference of all, though, is that JetBlue is profitable. Since the beginning of last year, the airline industry has lost more than twelve billion dollars, while JetBlue has made millions. Not surprisingly, JetBlue's stock took off when the company went public, last month. Today, its market capitalization is bigger than that of U.S. Airways and United Airlines combined.

Commerce Bank is different from other banks. Its branches stay open until 8 P.M.; its customers get lollipops and dog biscuits; employees wear red on Fridays. Commerce doesn't raise money for loans by issuing commercial paper. Rather, it gets most of the money from ordinary depositors' checking and savings accounts. It has never made a major acquisition. And, while many big banks are struggling, Commerce, which recently opened branches in Manhattan, is one of the fastest-growing banks in the country. Last year, it increased revenues by forty-one per cent and earnings by thirty-two per cent, while world bestriders like Bank of America and J. P. Morgan Chase saw revenues and earnings fall.

A few years ago, JetBlue and Commerce might have seemed like eccentric experiments, anachronisms left over from the days before companies were thought to need "global reach." The unquestioned doctrine of the past half decade was that a company had to get bigger to get better. "I cannot overemphasize the importance of sheer size and scale in today's environment," Ken Lewis, NationsBank's president, said in 1997, justifying his company's $62-billion merger with BankAmerica. It was, after all, the heyday of the supersized Value Meal, the lane-hogging Suburban, and the Starbucks venti latte. But today, as corporate America comes to after a $6.8-trillion merger binge, it's the would-be empire builders that look anachronistic. WorldCom, DaimlerChrysler, AOL Time Warner, United Airlines, J. P. Morgan Chase, Arthur Andersen: all have got worse as they've got bigger, losing market share to smaller, more nimble competitors as they sag under their own weight. When, a couple of weeks ago, Hewlett-Packard finally consummated its merger with Compaq, it was hard not to think, How very 1999.

The C.E.O.s who were looking to justify their inflated stock prices by growing larger forgot the hard lessons of the previous decades. Thirty years ago, giants like General Motors and I.B.M., believing that their size and influence made them invulnerable, found out that they were ill equipped for the challenges they faced from Japan, Germany, and Silicon Valley. Breakups, bankruptcies, and downsizings ensued; soon the American corporation was reborn as a lean machine. But the imperial impulse remained.



CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

The trouble is, it's not easy to be both efficient and big. As a corporation supersizes itself, it usually gets divided up into little duchies, which tend to pursue their own interests, not the company's. (One reason that I.B.M. lagged in the early nineteen-nineties was that the people in its mainframe business, fearing for their jobs, impeded the company's efforts to embrace new technologies.) Added layers of management, meanwhile, weaken the connection between a worker's effort and a company's performance. (Peter, a programmer for a giant computer company in the movie "Office Space," says, "The thing is, Bob, it's not that I'm lazy. It's that I just don't care.") The bigger the company, the harder it is for top executives to know what's going on. Vice-presidents get away with exaggerating the good news and hiding the bad. Basically, large corporations often end up "paying people to lie," the Harvard economist Michael Jensen says.

They also often end up paying people to slack off. Three years ago, the social scientist Robert Axtell constructed a series of computer simulations that mimicked the behavior of corporations in the U.S. economy. Axtell discovered that, once a company reached a certain size, employees expended much less effort. In the biggest firms, "free riding has become rampant," he says, and the workers who are actually trying to get something done grow frustrated and leave. Keeping after the loafers, sucking up to the grinds: that's no way to run a business.

Size does matter. Up to a certain point, the more widgets you produce, the cheaper each widget becomes. But you no longer have to be General Motors to reap economies of scale. Several recent studies suggest a Goldilocks effect: medium-sized companies enjoy the benefits of scale more than the big ones do. One 1998 study found that smaller banks were more efficient on a per-customer basis than their hulking rivals; they have lower expenses and higher profits. Smaller supermarkets are as cost-effective as larger ones. As technology gets cheaper, the little people can afford it. Today, even mom-and-pops have access to more computer power than they know what to do with.

The paradox is that midsize companies are rarely content to stay that way. Commerce hopes to double its assets by 2005. JetBlue aspires to be like Southwest Airlines, the quintessential mid-tier success story, which, in turn, intends to have as many planes as United Airlines by 2008. Once upon a time, the WorldComs and NationsBanks were JetBlues, too, and things might have gone better for them had they understood that you can be too big or too small—that sometimes it's better to be just right. Unfortunately, every grande seems to believe in its heart that one day it will be a venti, too.

—*James Surowiecki*

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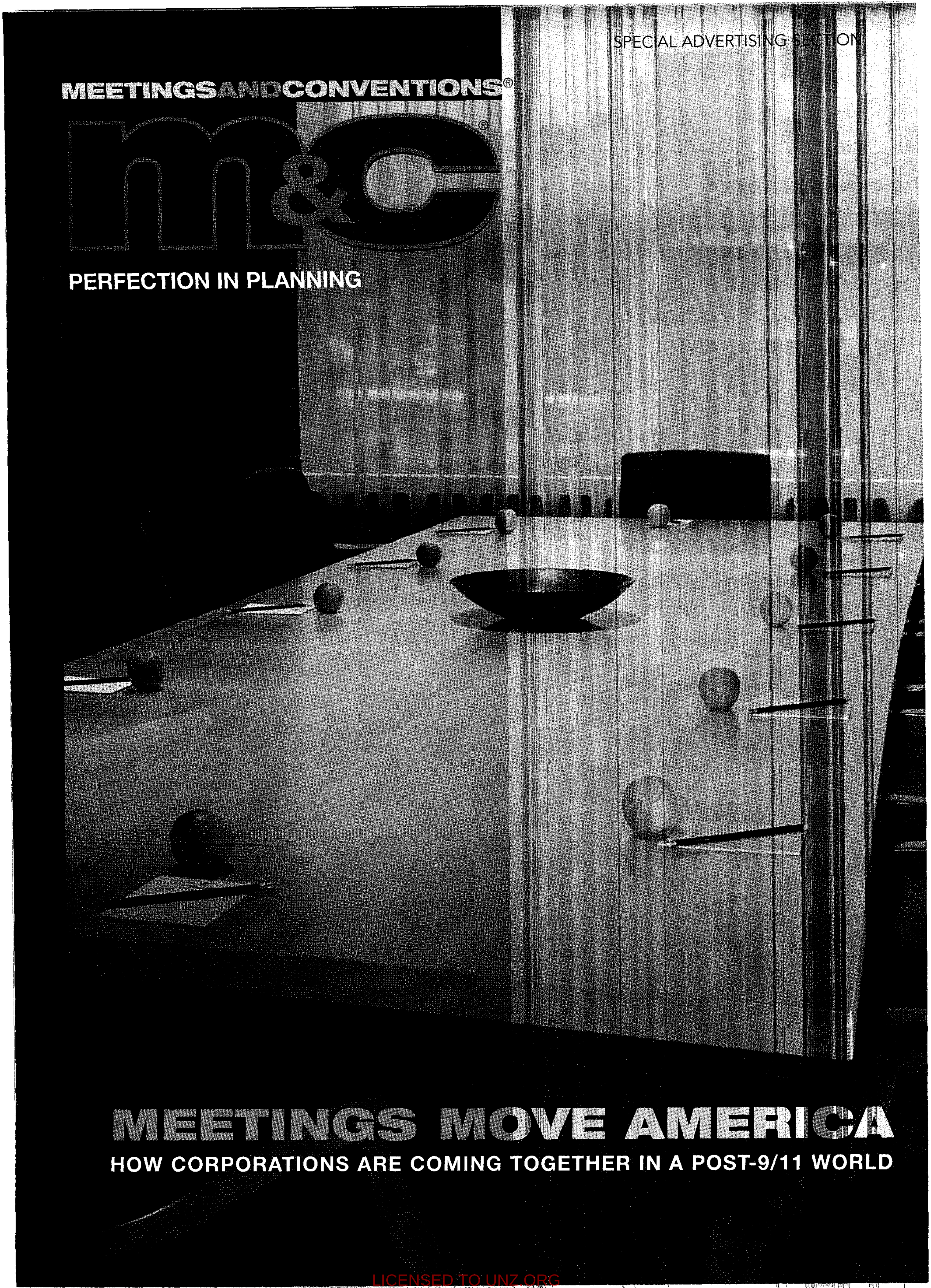

MEETINGS MOVE AMERICA

HOW CORPORATIONS ARE COMING TOGETHER IN A POST-9/11 WORLD

Cover: The Westin Grand in Vancouver, BC; Top left: the Orlando World Center Marriott; Top right: The banquet roof facility at the centrally located Wyndham Bel Age in West Hollywood.

Above: the Executive Conference Center at the Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers.

by Cheryl-Anne Sturken

Getting back to business. It's the new agenda, the motto of the day, the mantra of the moment—and it's exactly what's happening in boardrooms, on factory floors, in shops, and on desktops across the land. We're meeting again. Planning again. Contracting, buying, and building again. Recession? It's been downgraded to downturn. Fear of flying? Not a deal-breaker for the patient travelers waiting on lines and wading through detection wands in airports humming with activity. The official prefix of post-9/11 is "re," as in recovering, retooling, returning.

All of which is not to gloss over the challenges facing our nation. Corporate America saw its mettle severely tested in 2001. A sputtering economy, budget axes gone aerobic, layoffs, salary freezes—and that was the good part of the year. Then came that terrible morning forever seared into memory, and as the United States was jolted into facing the unimaginable, everything simply, shockingly came to a halt.

In the days and weeks that followed, we needed to face a terrible toll, find new footing, and somehow begin to move on. Inevitably, inexorably, we did.

MOVING FORWARD

As the midpoint of 2002 approaches, corporations are leaner, more efficient, more eager. There is a renewed conviction among senior management that the power of face-to-face meetings to drive business is more critical than ever, as evidenced by recent reports.

> Corporate leaders increasingly are rolling up their sleeves and becoming more active partners with their own meeting planners.

In a March 2002 survey of 200 corporate travel managers conducted by the Alexandria, VA-based National Business Travel Association, which represents more than 2,000 travel managers and suppliers, 65 percent of respondents said they have seen demand for travel increase by at least 10 percent since January.

In April, the New York City–based lodging consulting group of PricewaterhouseCoopers forecasted a rise in 2002 hotel room occupancy of three percent, a significant increase over its February prediction that occupancy would fall by 1.1 percent compared with 2001. "The recovery has exceeded everyone's expectations—even mine, I'm willing to admit," says Bjorn Hanson, chairman of PricewaterhouseCoopers' lodging practice.

Meanwhile, David Kassel, director of the Wilton, CT-based global conference group of the professional services giant Deloitte & Touche, expects to begin planning some 450 meetings with his staff of 26 over the next 12 months. This represents a major turnaround for the New York City–based Fortune 500 company, which, in the aftermath of

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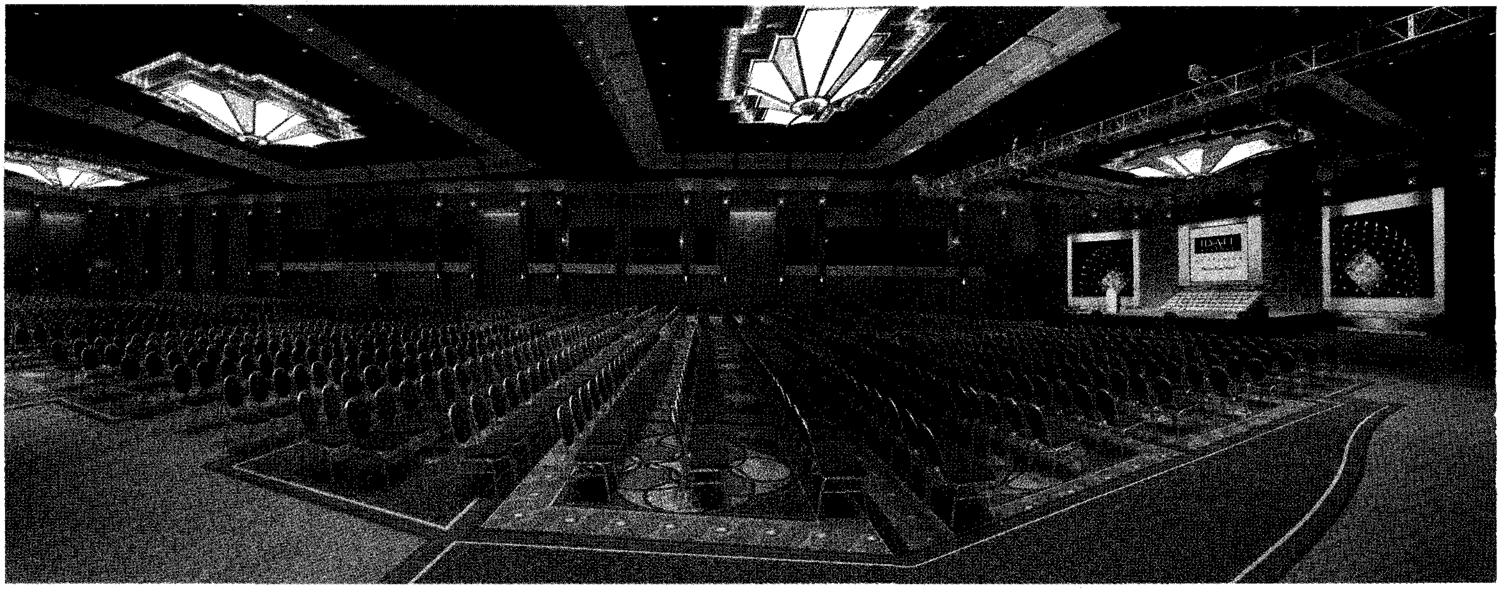


Top: Hyatt Regency Dallas is within walking distance of the city's convention center and business district (pictured: the Landmark Ballroom); Above: Hyatt Regency Atlanta's soaring Atrium lobby.

9/11, put all meetings on hold as it concentrated on relocating several hundred displaced employees from its downtown headquarters. "We anticipate coming back to 70 percent of our meeting demand by June 1," says Kassel.

And at McKesson Corp., the San Francisco-based health-care services firm, meetings have made a rapid rebound in recent months. Since last September, "we had only one meeting canceled and 12 postponed," says Diane Elliott, CMP, director of meeting services. "My staff will do 250 meetings this year."

MANAGEMENT GETS INVOLVED

As the number of meetings grows, corporate leaders increasingly are rolling up their sleeves and becoming more active partners with their own meeting planners. They are discovering the world of resources at a planner's fingertips, whether it's third-party suppliers who can handle everything from site selection to room décor, or security providers who keep dogged watch—sometimes using dogs—on the front and side doors.

It can be argued that this simply reflects a whopping bottom-line priority: In 1999 alone, U.S. corporations spent $10.2 billion on meetings, according to the Meetings & Conventions 2000 Meetings Market Report, a biennial study.

But there's more to it than that. Modern business practice holds that in today's competitive hothouse atmosphere, companies need to exude a strong image, send a clear message, and control their chosen turf as never before. And all of these objectives begin around the conference table, whether in-house or on the road.

Given such parameters, it's no surprise that, according to the February 2002 Corporate Travel Benchmark Report by GetThere, an online corporate travel booking firm based in Menlo Park, CA, 65 percent of their 100 members say GetThere's chief financial officers are now more involved in their company's travel program than they were a year ago.

Also within the past year, companies such as Northfield, IL-based Kraft Foods, Montvale, NJ-based KPMG and Cambridge, MA-based Akamai Technologies Inc. have implemented or tweaked existing travel policies to require senior management approval. Some managers are even getting involved in choosing a meeting's destination, selecting speakers, and directing the meeting's content.

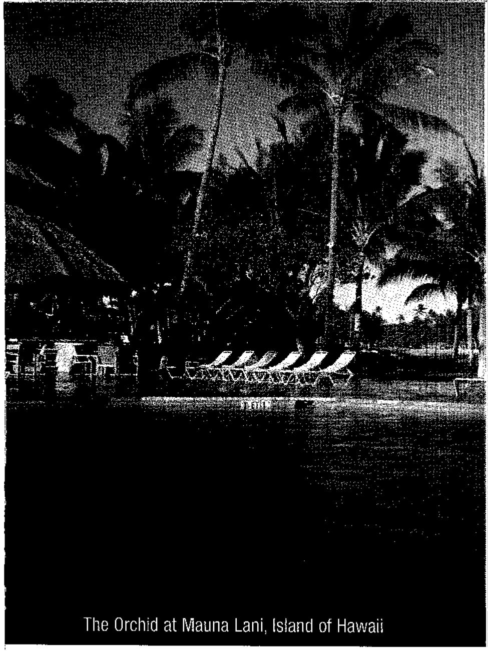
Considering that the average annual corporate travel spending of respondents in the GetThere survey is $52 million, it is clear that how these dollars are allocated has a significant impact on a company's fiscal health. Party-heavy meetings that generate little return on investment are out. Solid, educational content is in. Motivating employees, rewarding excellence, and solidifying key client relationships all are high on the agenda.

But perhaps the most important relationship in this picture is the one between planners and the hotels in which meetings are held and attendees are housed.

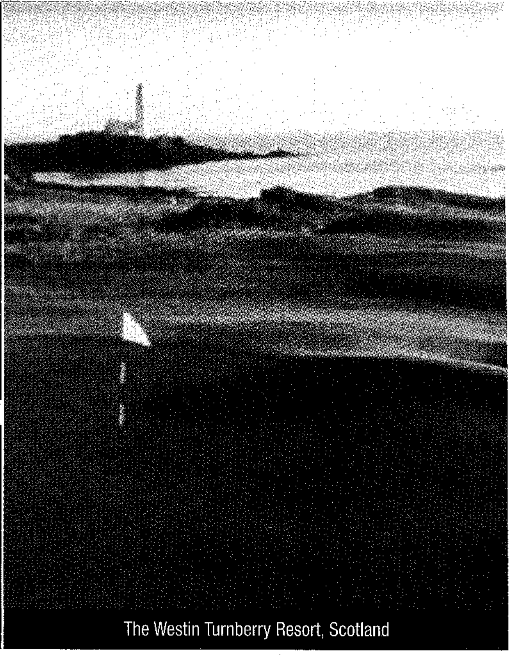
HOTELS MEET THE CHALLENGE

For their part, major chains are investing in cutting-edge technology to provide quick, easy, and cost-effective solutions for their clients.

this page, courtesy of Chris Smith; Tony Soluri


The Orchid at Mauna Lani, Island of Hawaii

W San Francisco, California


The Westin Turnberry Resort, Scotland

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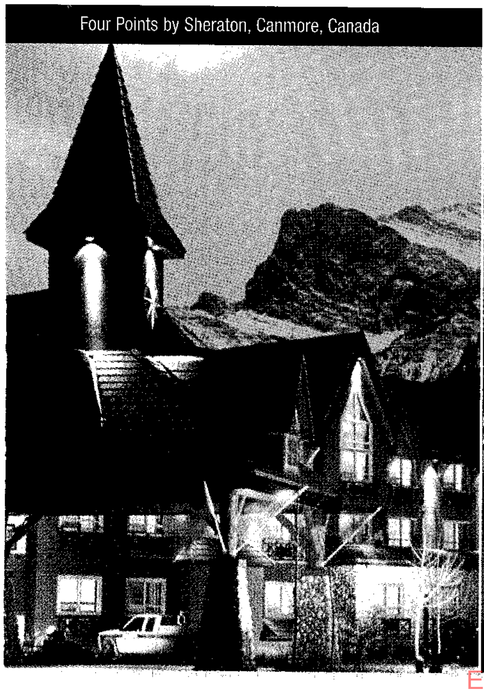
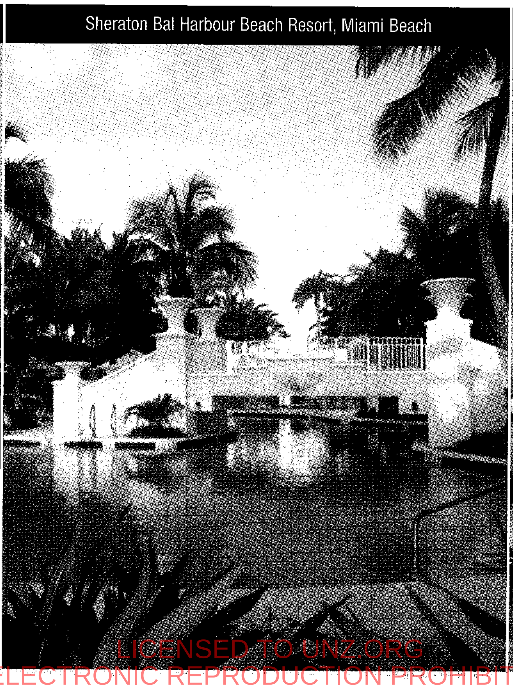


Sheraton Bal Harbour Beach Resort, Miami Beach



The Westin River North, Chicago

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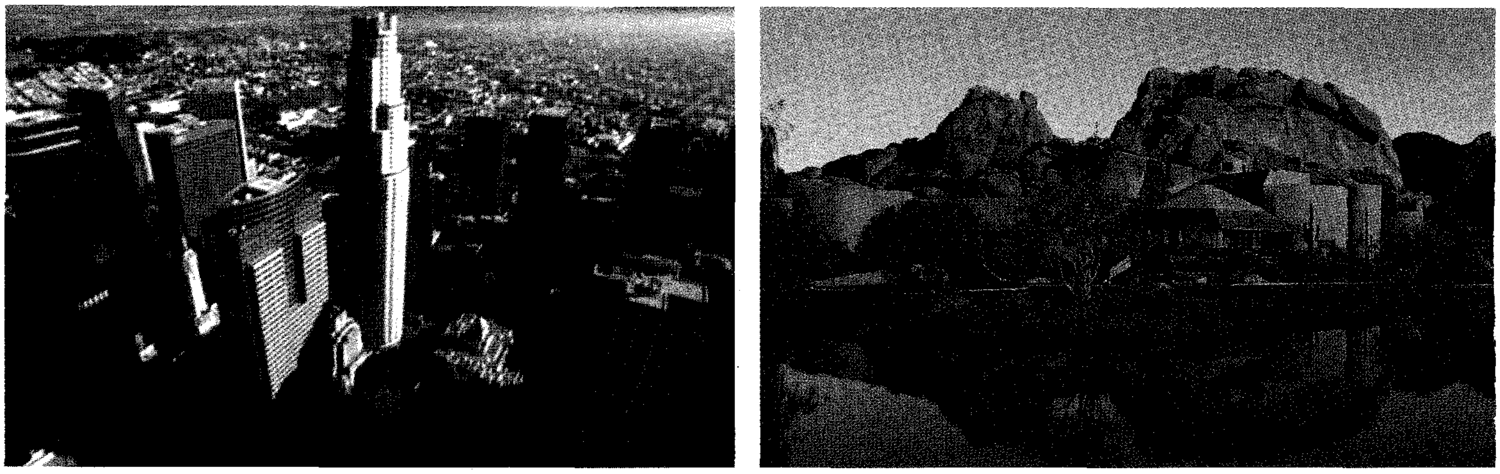

Left: A premier center of commerce and culture, Los Angeles is unrivaled for the myriad hotel options and state-of-the-art meeting facilities it affords the business executive; *Right:* the Boulders Resort north of Scottsdale, Arizona, is sculpted into the dramatic Sonoran Desert foothills.

l-r courtesy of Tom and Michele Grimm; Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

The result? Planners can book meetings and accommodations online with greater efficiency; turn a meeting room into a Webcast studio at the drop of a command key; enjoy the rush that only high-speed Internet access can deliver.

Hotels also are investing in staff training and development to raise service standards to new heights. Reflecting a recent priority, many chains now include security directors in pre-conference meetings and hold mandatory security training sessions for all employees, from housekeeping to senior management. Cross-training efforts are also under way, ensuring that department heads are familiar with more than just their own areas of specialty.

> Today's meeting planners are pioneers in a post-9/11 business landscape that has only begun to be charted.

Most conspicuously, despite the ups and downs of the national economy, the large chains are bullish enough about future demand that almost all the major players are expanding in key destination cities. Some examples:

- Hyatt will open three new properties in the next six months, including the Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort and Spa in California.
- Marriott launched two new Ritz-Carltons in New York City, one near Battery Park in January and one by Central Park scheduled for a May debut.
- Le Méridien is building its first Art + Tech hotel, a new line of high-concept properties, in Minneapolis.
- By year-end, Starwood Hotels & Resorts will add eight new properties in the U.S., including the newly opened 1,000-room Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa in Hollywood, FL.
- As part of its product enhancement strategy, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts continues to invest significantly in the spa element by adding Golden Door Spas to its luxury resorts.

WORKABLE SOLUTIONS

Today's meeting planners are pioneers in a post-9/11 business landscape that has only begun to be charted. This new terrain requires new thinking in several crucial areas.

Bolstering safety. Even when a hotel comes through with flying colors, that's not enough for the corporate planners at Fargo, ND-based Microsoft Great Plains. The software company has introduced a new badge system at its events, hires additional security, and now requires attendees to show proof of identification upon registration. These moves represent a large investment for a company that holds five major three- to four-day events a year of up to 3,500 attendees, plus *an additional 15 internal meetings and incentives.*

Going by ground. Corporate travel managers are increasingly offering alternative modes of transportation to help attendees get to meetings without the stress of commercial air travel.

Employees at McKesson Corp. are snagging a seat on their corporate jet or driving to regional meetings when they can. "It used to be just executives on our jet," says Diane Elliott, "but at a recent meeting in Santa Barbara, California, I noticed nine or ten people who had never flown on it before. And some drove down from San Francisco."

When it comes to classic business travel routes, the rails are heating up. On the Boston to Washington, D.C., corridor, Amtrak's high-speed Acela Express is now drawing even with Delta and US Airways shuttles.

Proving value. "People are no longer having meetings for the sake of having meetings," notes Andrea McGrath, a certified meeting professional and associate director of conference services for Northfield, IL-based Kraft Foods North America. "They are being very careful in how and where they spend their money."

When dollars are tight, perception is everything. Creating and delivering a meeting that truly meets a company's objectives without setting off charges of "wasteful spending" can become a delicate tap dance.

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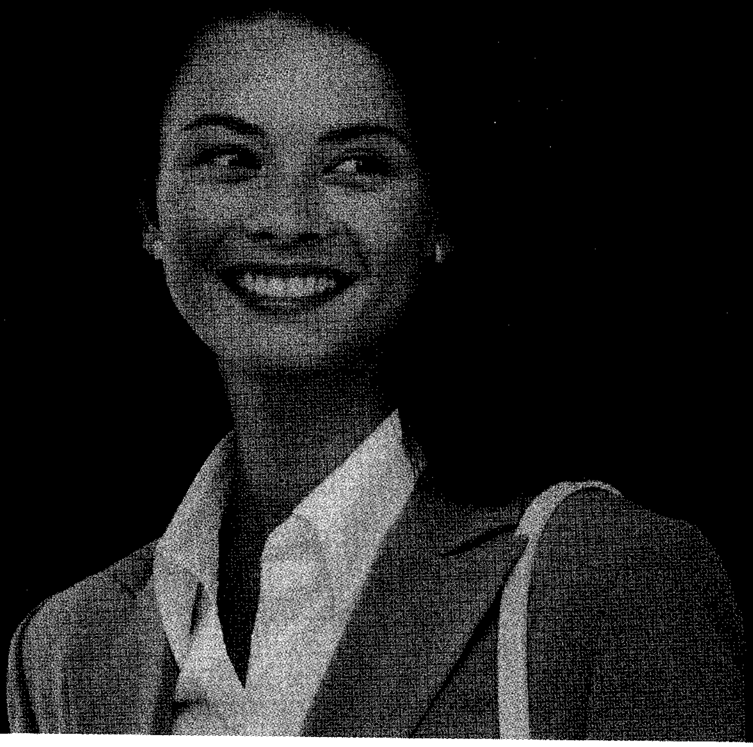
breeze



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From East to West à Le Méridien: (left) The classically inspired Le Parker Méridien lobby filled with natural light, provides a restorative respite from the bustle of midtown Manhattan; (right) a deluxe room at Le Méridien in Beverly Hills features an oversized work area and a private fax and printer.

courtesy of Le Méridien Hotels and Resorts

More than ever, corporate planners are learning to be skilled strategists. Yes, they want decent room rates, but far more important than ferreting out a rock-bottom rate is ensuring that value and service permeate the meeting. Every dollar invested in the event must return value. Planners are pushing for added value—complimentary shoe shines and daily newspapers, turndown service, late-night accessibility to the business center—and hotels are delivering.

Along with quality service is an increased demand for quality content. "I work directly with management to create a strong business agenda that meets the company objective," says Allison Harris, CMP, manager of conference services for San Diego–based LPL Financial Services, the largest independent broker dealer in the U.S. "Since September 11, our people are asking, 'What is this all about, anyway? Is it all worth it?' We are trying to give them the motivation they need. We would much rather spend more money on a top-notch speaker for them than spend it somewhere else." LPL's meetings grew by 21 percent in 2001 over 2000, and Harris says she expects the same growth in 2002.

Hiring outside help. As downsizings, mergers, and budgets have tightened the resources of many internal corporate meeting departments, a growing number of time-strapped planners have turned to outsiders to fill manpower needs. Meeting planners rely on third parties for site inspections, site selection, property recommendations, securing of rooms and meeting space, and contract negotiations. Hotels, which pay them a commission on the rooms they sell, rely on third parties to drive group meeting business their way. It is a three-way, time-tested relationship that has become a standard means of doing group business.

"When HelmsBriscoe negotiates for our meetings business with hotels, they are able not only to leverage our meetings, but also their company's buying volume," says Clydette Haynes, a regional training director of Pfizer Inc., based in Dallas. In October 2001, Haynes contracted with Scottsdale, AZ-based HelmsBriscoe to handle all of Pfizer's 2002 training sessions.

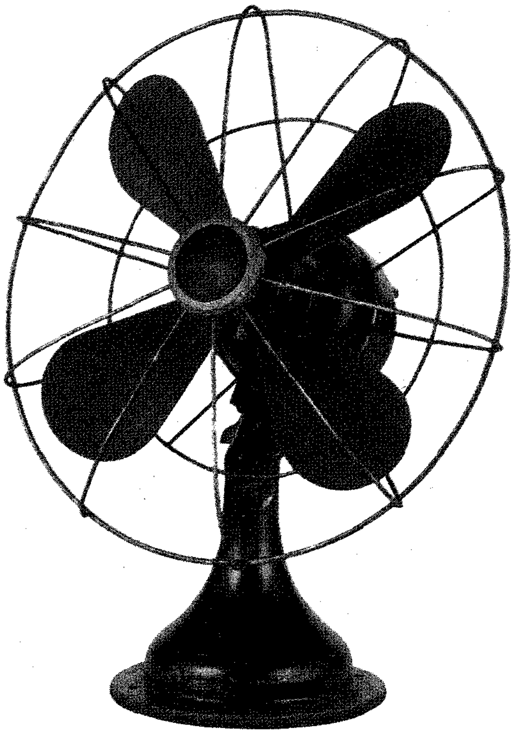
Turning to technology. As they look for more cost-effective ways of planning meetings, corporate meeting departments have begun to invest heavily in technological solutions.

Management has given Deloitte & Touche's global conference group the dollars to invest in an online system to register employees for meetings, thereby cutting back on costly telephone calls and mailings.

GetThere, which in August 2000 acquired AllMeetings, added to the company's online meeting booking product by developing the product further—it now allows attendees to book air travel online at the same time they register for meetings. A March survey of the company's corporate clients found that 21.4 percent currently book meetings online, while another 28.6 percent are evaluating whether to move in that direction.

All of these solutions serve this essential business truth: Nothing can replace the value and effectiveness of face-to-face meetings. And that means one thing above all else: Getting back to business.

(Cheryl-Anne Sturken is Senior Editor of Meetings & Conventions *magazine.)*



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MEETING GOALS

The Powerful HelmsBriscoe Advantage

In 1992, Roger T. Helms welcomed his first son into the world. On the very same day, his imagination and vision gave birth to an innovative concept that would reshape the meeting planning industry.

In just ten years, his company, HelmsBriscoe, has emerged as a powerful force that has redefined how the business of meetings is conducted here and around the world. It is now the hospitality industry's largest site-selection firm. Like many inspired ideas in commerce, the concept behind the company was breathtakingly straightforward. While other industries had realized the enormous financial benefits of group purchasing and centralized buying, the meeting planning and hospitality industry had yet to test the waters.

Helms saw an opportunity. A veteran in the industry, he first noticed the gap between hotels and clients as a marketer for the Registry Hotel chain. While he had worked closely with national representative firms who marketed his properties to clients, he wasn't always pleased with the results. And if he wasn't pleased, Helms wasn't confident that his clients' interests were being addressed in the most effective manner either.

> HelmsBriscoe today boasts 370 associates booking meetings in cities coast to coast and around the world.

Enter HelmsBriscoe—a new firm that would work exclusively with clients. Anticipating the trend toward outsourcing in corporate America, HelmsBriscoe positioned itself as a versatile partner that could assist in the planning and execution of meetings. The proposition was that if enough clients expressed interest in the services of HelmsBriscoe, the major hotels would follow. So like the fabled baseball diamond in the Iowa cornfield, HelmsBriscoe built an entirely new business model, and both clients and hotels came.

"It's essentially a win-win proposition for everybody," notes Helms. "Though we are 100% client-driven, our strong partnerships with hotels make us an important strategic client to them at the same time." A knowledgeable staff is the key to HelmsBriscoe's relationship with both clients and hotels. Clients benefit from each associate's intimate knowledge of the dynamics of the hospitality industry and of the broad range of properties available. Hotels benefit from a relationship with a partner that fully understands their business—an enterprise that not only brings them bookings but also communicates with them in a language they understand.

After successful trial runs in a few secondary markets, HelmsBriscoe today boasts 370 associates booking meetings in cities coast to coast and around the world. Not surprisingly, HelmsBriscoe's success has inspired competition. "We created a business that adds value to clients while actually reducing the cost of sales for hotels. The business model makes sense and others are now attempting to replicate our efforts," notes Helms. Inspired by the competition, HelmsBriscoe continues to lead the industry with a company-wide commitment to new ideas. "As the market leader, we will continue to innovate. While our team is proud of its accomplishments we also realize that we are just beginning. Today less than 5% of all meetings use HelmsBriscoe or one of our competitors. We will continue to pressure ourselves to find ways to add value to clients and associates until that number becomes 100%. It just makes too much sense; why would anybody buy meetings any other way?"

The typical HelmsBriscoe transaction is swift and seamless. A client initiates the contact with a request for a future meeting. HelmsBriscoe assembles a quick profile of the meeting specifications and then taps into its broad range of resources and contacts with hotels to produce a list of available options, usually within 48 hours. Once a property is selected, HelmsBriscoe coordinates the contract process and is compensated by the hotel that is ultimately booked.

As the business has grown, HelmsBriscoe's clients have sought additional services from the firm. Resource One, a subsidiary of the company, offers a full range of meeting planning resources, including registration, on-site management, and full accounting services. HelmsBriscoe has also expanded its relationship to hotels with the creation of Performance International, a specialized consulting firm assisting hotel and resort companies in everything from recruitment to technology.

HelmsBriscoe has definitely met a crucial need in the marketplace. The best evidence of this fact is demonstrated by a question Helms frequently fields from new clients. After a brief profile of what the firm can do for them, he's often asked, "You mean there is a company that does that?" His answer is yes, and based on the swift growth of HelmsBriscoe, it obviously does it very well.

For more information on HelmsBriscoe, call the worldwide headquarters in Scottsdale, AZ, at (866) 886-0678 or visit www.helmsbriscoe.com.

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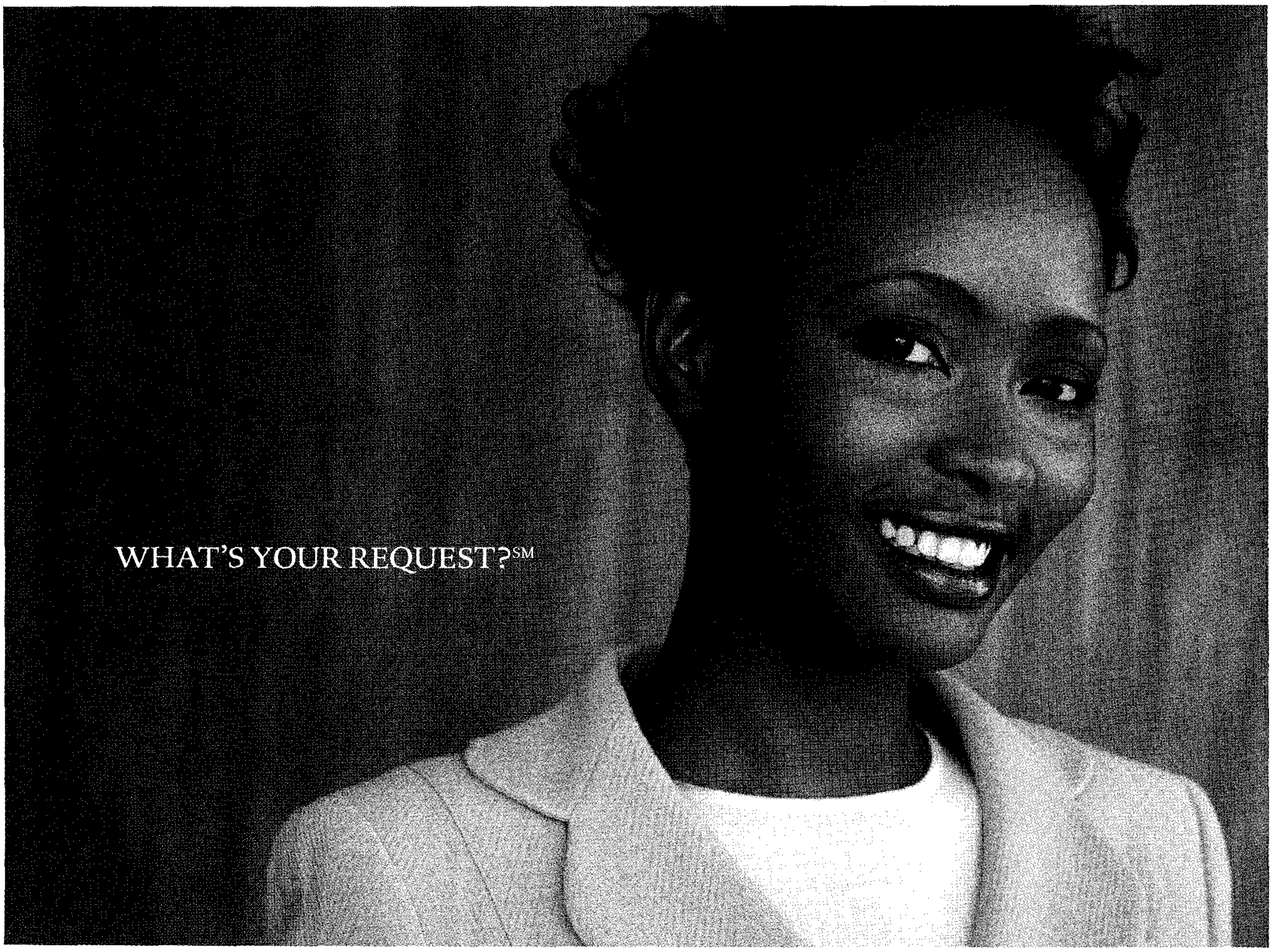

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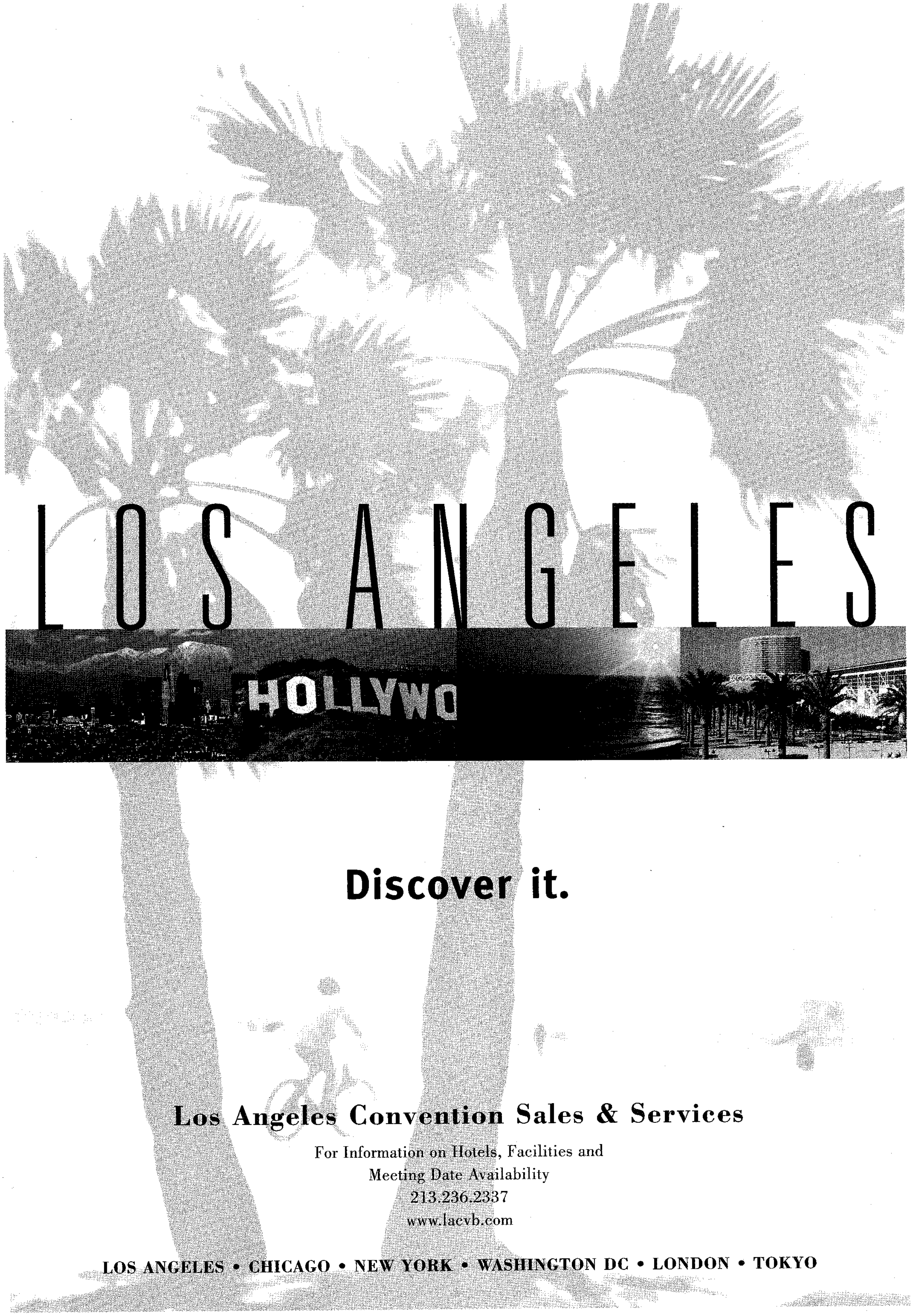

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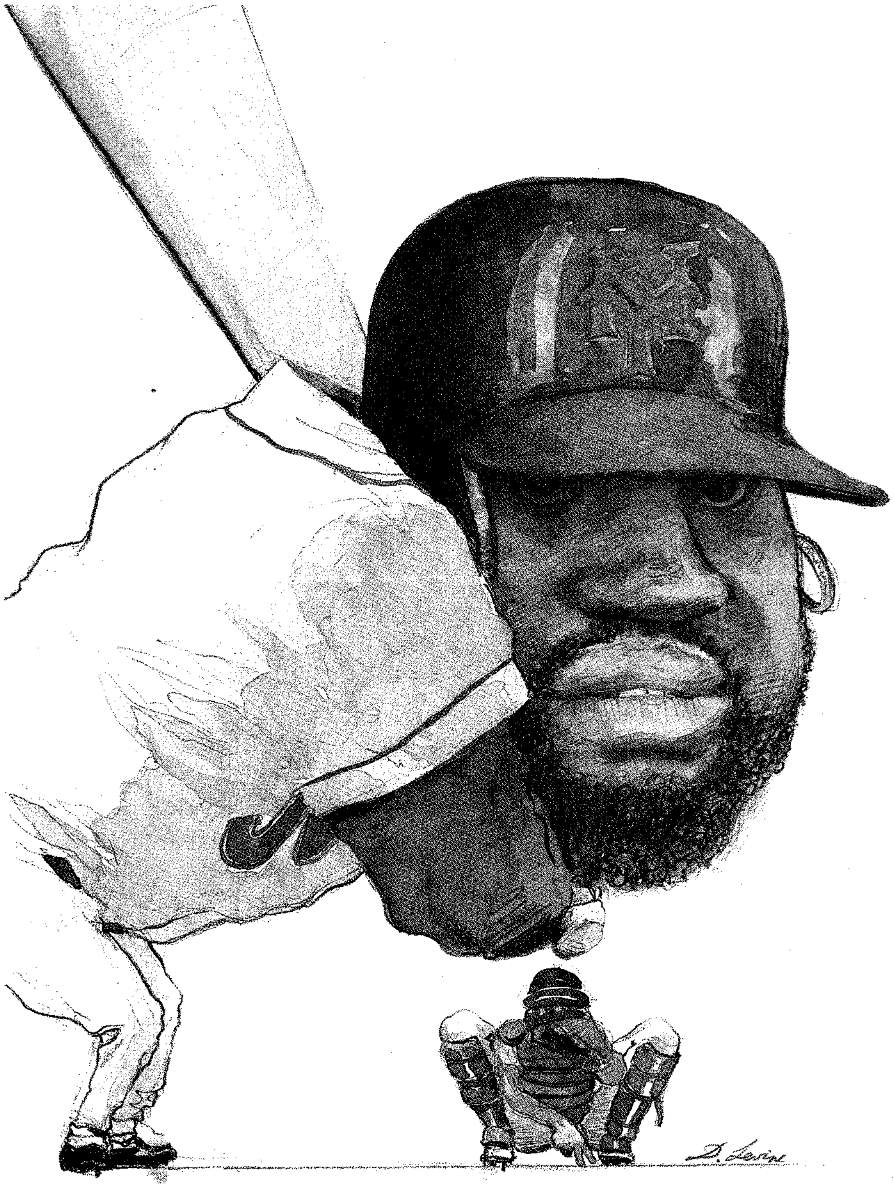
THE SPORTING SCENE

LET GO, METS

The joys and boos of rooting for that other team.

BY ROGER ANGELL

Baseball never seems serious until along about Memorial Day, but this time the early stuff has felt like a soap. Seven weeks into the season, the Yankees' newborn television network, YES, and Cablevision have contrived to block three million customers from catching any of a scheduled hundred and thirty games over their home sets, because of a fee squabble. The Red Sox, under new ownership and an amiable new manager (Grady Little), who says that he plans never to go to sleep mad at any of his players, have sailed off to a 26–9 start, the best record in either league. Earlier, baseball commissioner Bud Selig reminded owners that a million-dollar fine would be levied against the club of any official heard to utter a single word or groan about labor issues during the current negotiations with the Players Association over the sport's expired basic agreement. (He didn't mention a finder's fee if a breach should occur, but if that is in the books—well, Bud, you have my number.) The Pirates, losers of a hundred games last year, raised their ticket prices for the new season; in April they found themselves unexpectedly and briefly at the top of the National League Central Division, even as their attendance headed in the other direction. Speaking of tickets, a friend of a friend of mine called the Yankees the other day to ask about the availability of good seats for a Thursday, July 18th, game against the Tigers, and was told sure, there were some left, and did he want the order at $47 or $55 or $65 per? Maybe the fan should hop out to the Giants' Pacific Bell Park, where he might still catch Barry Bonds from a nice $28 box behind home. Hurry.



New first baseman Mo Vaughn has shown more hulk than hits.

The Minnesota Twins, originally targeted for termination before the start of this season by Commissioner Selig, have held on to first place in the American League Central, while the Montreal Expos, the other Dead Team Walking, were for a time leading or nearly leading the frail National League East. With things as they are, this counts as great—or semi-ironic, reverse-popular great—news for the commissioner, whose own club, the Milwaukee Brewers (operated for the present by his daughter, Wendy Selig-Prieb), is in the cellar of the N.L. Central. The Brewers, who play in a new stadium, Miller Park, built at taxpayers' expense, are not on Selig's schedule for possible "contraction," as the end of franchise life is euphemistically known.

Meantime, in another part of town, John Rocker, the hyper ex-Braves, ex-Indians reliever and No. 7 line subway critic, was briefly dispatched to the minors by his latest club, the Texas Rangers, after compiling a 9.53 earned-run average. "No! He *was*?" exclaimed Mets manager Bobby Valentine on being told the news. Mike Cameron, an outfielder with the Seattle Mariners, hit four home runs in one game, against the White Sox, becoming the eleventh man in modern baseball to pull off this feat. Lou Gehrig was the first. The Chicago pitchers responsible for the homers—Jon Rauch and Jim Parque—who'd thrown Cameron two fat pitches apiece, were dispatched to the minors after the game. Elsewhere, another pitcher, the Reds'

DAVID LEVINE

Jose Rijo—perhaps remembered as the M.V.P. of the 1990 World Series—won his first game in seven years (against the Cubs, on April 21st), after enduring five surgeries and a six-year absence from the majors.

Earlier in our story, Jeffrey Loria, the New York art-dealer owner of the Expos (who drew an average 7,935 spectators per home game last year), was permitted to trade up for a different low-interest (fans, not loans) club, the Florida Marlins. The Montreal front office, decimated by the transaction, is now staffed by Major League Baseball employees; this qualifies the 'Spos' new skipper, Frank Robinson, as the first commander of a baseball protectorate. Meantime, Randy Johnson and Curt Schilling, the World Champion Arizona Diamondbacks' stellar starting duo last year (they went 21–6 and 22–6, respectively), started up where they left off, and stood at a cumulative 14–2 at last count. Johnson, pitching against the Colorado Rockies in his fifth start, gave up two hits and struck out seventeen. Three of his last four pitches were timed at a hundred miles an hour.

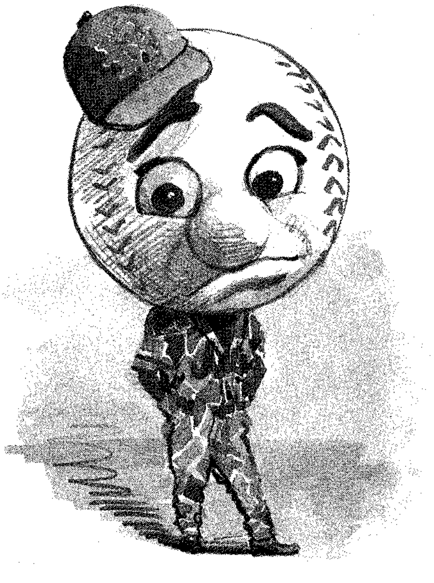
Barry Bonds, who hit a record seventy-three home runs last year, smacked two on the Giants' Opening Day, and two more the next afternoon. That same week, a teammate, second baseman Jeff Kent, came off the disabled list, after nearly being fined thirty-seven thousand dollars per missed game by the Giants for violating a risk clause in his contract while incurring a pre-season wrist injury. Kent said he'd hurt himself while washing his truck, but eyewitnesses came forward to say they'd seen him crash while doing wheelies on his Harley. Thirty-seven thousand multiplied by a hundred and sixty-two games equals Kent's salary of six million bucks—which remained intact when the Giants' front office, like Tony Soprano the dad, lost its nerve at the last instant and forgave.

And, only recently, the *Post* contributed the tingling headline "MR. MET VS TALIBAN" . . . "Baseball mascot stationed at Gitmo." Mr. Met, the Mets' roving macrocephalic, had just celebrated his fortieth year on the job, at a Sunday date against the Expos, without any announcement that his inner self, an Army Reserve major named Lee Reynolds, was no longer with us, having been called up for duty at Guantánamo Bay. More on Mr. Met later.

My plan to spend a lot more time with the Mets this season has been rewarded, sort of. Once again, I have come to see that uncertainty and reversal are the everyday flavor of the game—a truth obscured or forgotten when you hang around the Yankees. Last year, the Mets were second worst in batting in the National League, worst in runs scored and slugging average, and first, in a close contest, in ennui. All that would end with their expensive off-season acquisition of Mo Vaughn, the eminent ex-Angels and ex-Red Sox first baseman-slugger, and the perennial All Star Robbie Alomar, by consensus the best second baseman of our epoch. The infield, where Edgardo Alfonzo had been shifted from second base to third, would be the Mets' best in a long time. The starting pitching, according to my winter Mets party line, was up in the air, given the three new starters Pedro Astacio, Jeff D'Amico, and Shawn Estes, who all came intriguingly decked out in accomplishment and physical frailty. The bullpen was a serious concern, given the continuing disablement of its archducal lefty, John Franco, after an elbow repair in December. Defense—well, no worry there, at least. The swift Roger Cedeño and the burgeoning (how long can you say "promising"?) Jay Payton, in center, would catch everything airborne, and perhaps even steal some bases at last.

Well, no: cancel the above. These Mets assumptions—every one of them—have turned out to be wrong. Mo Vaughn and Robbie Alomar have yet to get untracked at the plate, at this writing or waiting. (Some of Mo's missing power has been attributed to his swinging a bat that was two or three ounces heavier than he thought it was: a baseball first, to me.) Cedeño circling and staggering under a long fly ball and then missing the catch and Payton mindlessly popping up on the first pitch have gnawed their way into my Mets consciousness, like Seaver's fastball and Mookie Wilson's hopper. The infield has been grotesquely awful in stretches and presumably cannot do worse: the club's forty-six errors are the most in either league. The starting pitchers, by contrast, have been sound and can be counted—if you count the right way—among the better staffs around. In the pen, David Weathers, Grant Roberts, Scott Strickland, and Armando Benitez have proved hostile and unflappable. With a dog's breakfast of team stats like this, the Mets couldn't be expected to win—except that they won just enough to stay in first place in their division for two weeks running.

Nothing about these Mets remains true for long, which is why you watch them in action with a riveted and memorizing anxiety: Mo's glowering gaze at the pitcher from behind the parapet of his right shoulder; Mo signing autographs for the Baha Men R. & B. group, with his low-pulled cap pushing out his ears; Al Leiter's midgame clenched jaw and clenched mind; Joe McEwing's balletic hoppings in the batter's box, where he starts and finishes his swing on tiptoe; Alomar's scary backhand flips of the ball from out of his glove; Mike Piazza's cockily tilted helmet and ticking calm when he's up at bat; Pedro Astacio waggling his drooping right hand on the mound like a fishing lure as he looks in for the sign; and Edgardo Alfonzo (the Met of Mets, to me) dropping the head of his bat on the away pitch and smoothly redirecting the ball—this time, anyway—for a single into right field. If you find all this in your mind's eye at three-forty-five in the morning, you've renewed your license as a Mets fan and can come back the next day.



DAVID LEVINE

A reminder that Metsball can produce moments not elsewhere known to man arrived in an early-season Saturday game against the Expos, when Leiter, fielding a little sacrifice bunt, saw his routine toss over to the covering second baseman, Alomar, disappear in mid-flight, swallowed by an alien glove. It was a low-tech magic effect—you could see Leiter's "*Wha*?" in the middle of it the same instant you heard your own. John Valentin, the old-pro infielder who came over from the Red Sox this year, was filling in for the day at first base, an unfamiliar corner to him. Hurrying toward the plate to field the expected bunt was absolutely the correct move for him, but, when the ball went to Leiter instead, Valentin backpedalled uncertainly and then stuck out his mitt as the toss to first arced past him—oop! Nobody in the stands or on the field had ever seen this mini-cutoff play before, but the splendor of it was lost on Leiter, who was quickly victimized by another infield error and six unearned Montreal runs. The next miscue belonged to Rey Ordóñez, the routinely impeccable Mets shortstop, who also dropped a relay, in the fourth, and, two innings later, flubbed a little four-hop grounder, for his third error of the day. Ordóñez, amid a scattering of embarrassed boos, stared uncomprehending at the ball lying at his feet. In 1999, he committed four errors during the entire season, and began a run of a hundred and one errorless games at the position, a string unmatched by any shortstop in major-league history. After the game was over—the Mets had rallied energetically, converting an 0–7 deficit into an eventual 8–7 lead, only to lose the thing in the eleventh, on a home run by the vibrant Montreal slugger Vladimir Guerrero—I drove home in a refreshed haze of Metsian wonder.

Ordóñez had slammed his mitt—a black Wilson A2000 model—against the clubhouse wall after the game, and then snipped the laces out of it with a pair of trainer's scissors, making sure it would never clank again. This was more revenge than mojo, since he shifts to a fresh mitt every couple of weeks. Mo Vaughn and John Valentin, by contrast, have played with the same gloves for eight or nine years now—"I like things comfortable," Mo said—and the mitts feel as if there's more pine tar than leather to them by now. When Valentin let me grab hold of his for a minute, in the clubhouse, it grabbed me back.

Even in the midst of his troubles, Ordóñez continued to pull off dazzlingly difficult plays, including his patented stretching dive to the right, when he reaches across his body to backhand a scorching drive and at the same time drops to his right knee or extends the leg full-length, like a dancer flying into a split. This brings him to a skidding halt, with his body rising and turning in the same motion for the throw across the diamond; the left leg has trailed a fraction, opening his upper body enough to allow some steam on the peg. Nothing in modern baseball is prettier than this. It was the easier stuff that was giving him fits, that extra beat of time which told him and the rest of us how hard the work is after all.

I went back to Shea the day after the eleven-inning loss to the Expos, but this time sat jam-packed in the stands in short left, where patches of pale sunshine and mild booing (while Mets starter Steve Trachsel gave back an early 3–1 lead) and the shrilling of kiddie fans kept us cheerful. Fans in every style and vintage of Mets gear paraded up and down the aisles, and returning, view-blocking food-bearers, in ancient ritual, paused to ogle the field in response to the smallest hint of action. A busy dad in front of me missed Alomar's first-inning homer while on forage, and then blew Robbie's next dinger, in the third, when he'd gone down again for ice cream. Some mini-minors near me had to stand on their seats, teetering and peering—and sometimes grabbing my shirt or ear to keep balance—to catch fractional glimpses of the batter, way off to our right. Now and then one of the standees would step on the wrong part of his seat and disappear from view, like a wader taken down by a shark, but then resurface smiling, with peanut dust and bits of popcorn in his hair. The noise was amazing, and not much like the apprehensive or vengeful sounds of Yankee Stadium, where every game must be won.

These peewee fans enjoyed some between-inning gambollings by Mr. Met and a bunch of visiting mascots—the Phillie Phanatic, the Oakland white elephant, the Pirates' parrot, the Padres' tonsured friar, and others—here to help celebrate his ostensible fortieth anniversary. But I date back to the Polo Grounds era with this club, and recall Mr. Met's

a world at stake

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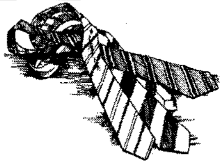

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predecessor, a beagle named Homer—a dog, I mean, and not a parade float. I am no fan of the Queens icon, holding that a stitched and grinning white ball is not the face of fun, but this time withheld complaint and even joined in speculative conversations about him in our loge sector. None of us knew as yet that the anima of Mr. Met was elsewhere, serving his country. But had not Mr. Met been known to add a tactful yarmulke to his getup in the past, on High Holy Day games? (I thought not.) And were these warmhearted visiting mascots the real thing, flown in for the afternoon from their distant home fields around the league, or were they untrained local talent, mere walk-ons under those outsized heads? (I took the cynical second view.) I didn't know it, but the same Santa debate was being argued up in the first-base-side mezzanine at this very moment, by my Mets-fan friend Gerry and his ten-year-old son, Guy, who was shocked at his father's suggestion that the mascot co-celebrants were not on the up and up. When the game ended—the Mets won it, 6–4—and they went home, someone turned on the Dodgers-Padres game, over ESPN, and there was the Padres' Swinging Friar shaking his belly on Pacific Coast time. "Oh, *Daad!*" Guy said, crestfallen.

I was back among the grownups the next evening—well, back in the press box—for the best entertainment of the young season, an extended docudrama against the Atlanta Braves, unexpectedly captured by the Mets, 7–6, in twelve. The Braves have eaten the Mets' lunch in recent years, while on the way to their brilliant run of ten straight post-season appearances, but this year's edition has proved fallible and just now stood last in the National League East. The game, in any case, suspended speculation with its own news. Shawn Estes, the Mets lefty starter, was rocked for two homers and five runs in the second inning but permitted by Bobby Valentine to stay on through the fifth, while he recaptured his poise and his curveball. Mike Piazza had led off the Mets' second inning with a homer to dead center field, and then did it again, farther and deeper, to start off the seventh. Doubles by Edgardo Alfonzo and Jeromy Burnitz now trimmed the Atlanta lead to 6–3, and Ordóñez, ordered to bunt on the first pitch, delivered Burnitz from third base on a delicious squeeze, with the runner crossing the plate untouched and no play at any base. "LetsgoMets!" . . . "LetsgoMets!" and here came John Valentin, up to bat in place of the pitcher, with a tying two-run shot, barely over the wall and a foot or two inside the left-field foul pole: his first pinch-hit homer in a ten-years-plus career. Stuff like this should be saved for September.

The Mets bullpen flingers had matters their way by now—they combined with Estes for what became a nine-inning midgame shutout, in fact—but Braves manager Bobby Cox slipped out of a pickle in the tenth, when he ordered a startling intentional pass to the dangerous Alfonzo, moving the winning run up to third base, before Jeromy Burnitz struck out to end the threat. The same situation came up again in the twelfth—you could hear the fans yammering about the coincidence—as Alfonzo again stepped in with runners at first and second. But this time Cox was down to a rookie pitcher named Gryboski, who could not be trusted to work with the bases loaded; Alfonzo rapped his third pitch to right-center for a single and the game.

Readers who infer a continuous cheering and optimism in the stands throughout this long test don't understand Mets fans. When Armando Benitez, the large fireballer, came on in the tenth, he was welcomed with the low, round noises of discontent. Benitez was the best closer in the league last year, with forty-three saves and the Rolaids Relief Man award to prove it. Standing on the mound with his head tilted back a fraction, he stares down at the batter as if through reading glasses, and then delivers serious heat. He is affable in the clubhouse, but too often (for me, at least) appears to be drawing upon a boyish optimism while at work; even when he's in serious difficulties you can see him checking out the illuminated, second-deck sign in short right field as it flashes the m.p.h. of his latest delivery. Benitez blew three saves along the way last year, two of them in critical late-season games against the Braves, hence the pitiless reminders. Here, in the unfamiliar role of holder, he held for his two innings, surrendering a

DESTINATIONS

Yesterday I saw some bears at the top of a waterfall.
They were watching salmon leap up from the cascade.

It was on television and, moreover, part of an ad.
Not one of them, salmon or bears, was impressed

by the water's will, its weight, its wrath, its wall,
the salmon flying out from that knockout force

like careless birds rising from a field of silver wheat.
The falling water obviously had no intention of getting

in the way of a salmon's destination. It was beautiful.
Trouble was, the bears were there with bear intentions.

Their heads bobbed up and down, perhaps admiring
every quiver and flash, their four feet as firmly planted

in water as the rockface itself. Now and then one of them
opened its mouth to let a fish dive into it. That was the part

that made me think of my own headlong leaps and dives
when I thought there would be no mouths to receive me.

—*Dorothea Tanning*

bare single, and gave way to Scott Strickland, who got the win. Bobby Valentine is impatient with the Shea fans' disloyalty to Armando—"The intelligence level could be greater," he once muttered about them. On another day, he pointed out that the Giants didn't make the playoffs last year, either, and that their closer, Robb Nen, blew *seven* saves. "What would happen if he was our guy?" Bobby said, shuddering.

The baseball skyline took on a different look on May 7th, when Barry Bonds came to town, with ten homers in tow. Already this year he had overtaken Harmon Killebrew, whose five hundred and seventy-three home runs had him in sixth place on the lifetime list, and was a few weeks or so away from Mark McGwire's five hundred and eighty-three. Sometime before the summer, he will put away Frank Robinson's fourth-best five hundred and eighty-six, and when the season is done he should be well into the six hundreds, an upland terrain heretofore occupied only by his godfather, Willie Mays. Ruth and Aaron are the last two peaks. From here on—everyone has been doing the arithmetic—the distance to Aaron's all-time top seven hundred and fifty-five gets divided by Bonds's age: he turns thirty-eight on July 24th. He is in great shape and hitting as well as he ever has, but four years at forty-five homers per will require his greatest performance.

We should not be distracted by a mere record, though. The news about Bonds is that he plays every day and still does it almost better than anyone else. Arriving at Shea, he was batting a league-leading .391, and also stood first in on-base percentage and slugging average—and walks. Bases on balls are boring, but they have become a daily reality for Bonds now, a dangling spear in his flank. Last year, he broke an ancient mark held by Babe Ruth when he walked a hundred and seventy-seven times, but with fifty free passes to date he'll surpass that and then some; more than a third of his trips to the plate this year end in a free pass. Well-known batters get two or three good pitches to swing at in every game, but whatever Barry does at the plate these days comes on a far leaner menu.

The walks were on his mind during a pre-game press conference, when he said that all those early free trips this year had made it tougher to get his early-season swing adjusted. "This is probably the hardest thing I've gone through in my career," he went on. "But I have the mentality and the focus to withstand it." He said he was happy that the Giants had been in strong contention in recent years—if they'd been in last place it would have been devastating. Team-play references are reflexive P.R. for star players these days, but Bonds here unexpectedly began talking about Curt Schilling and Randy Johnson's work in the World Series last fall, which he called the greatest pitching performance he'd ever seen. "But if Gonzalez doesn't get that hit"—in the bottom of the ninth inning of the last game—"they would have lost. Their team won that World Series. . . . There's no one person in baseball."

Pressed about the Aaron record, Bonds said, "I don't have enough games in my body to get there. I don't have enough years with a hundred and seventy walks to get there."

Bonds had his cap on backward during the press conference, above that jewelled-cross earring, and he spoke in the softly or grandly self-assured way that has irritated writers and fans throughout his career. Some baseball people I know believe that the accolade of "best player in baseball" widely bestowed upon Ken Griffey, Jr., a few years back was an intentional insult to Bonds, who has been persistently disliked and underrated. But there's been an almost tectonic shift in view about him, which arises less from his maturity than from the at last acknowledged evidence that in him we have a dedicated team player, a superior outfielder and base stealer, and a four-time Most Valuable Player who must be placed among the handful of best players who ever lived. Bobby Valentine, responding to a question about Bonds's presumed use of steroids in reaching his present strength and size, said, "Did they shoot steroids in his *eyes*?" And he brought up another tall left fielder, named Williams, and said, "If there's one of those two that's a little better than the other . . . well, my goodness."

Friends of mine who resist such talk get to hear my favorite Bonds record. When he steals fourteen more bases—he'll get around to this, for sure—he will take sole possession of the 500 Homers

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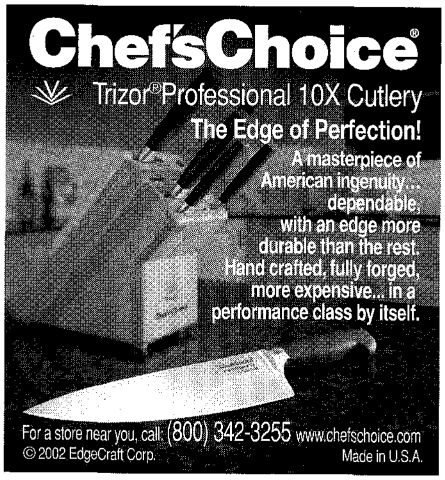

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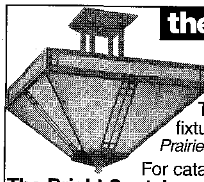

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plus 500 Stolen Bases Club. (It's always called a "club," for some reason; think of this one as the Porcellian.) He is already in the 400 HRs–400 SBs Club, of course: he's the only one there. You have to go back to the 300 Homers–300 Stolen Bases frat, down the street, to find him some company. There are three other members—Andre Dawson, Willie Mays, and Barry's father, Bobby Bonds.

Bonds, stepping up to the plate with no one aboard in the very first inning of the Giants' three-game visit, evoked the customary emotions. Batting left, he crowds the plate, and, with his long legs and fashionably long pants (they now engulf his shoetops, thanks to little elastic straps that slip over his spikes), expectant shoulders, and slightly choked-up, forwardly thrumming black bat, vacuums the available air from the moment. Almost visible were his records and his seventeen years in the majors; as one baseball guy said, "He's seen every pitch in history." Boos fell upon him—from apprehension or as character-comment—but they weren't as loud as those that followed the one, two, three, four straight balls now handed down by Mets starter Steve Trachsel. None of the pitches came near the strike zone; there was no attempt by Trachsel to disguise what was going on. He would take his chances with the rest of the Giants' order, but Barry was too tough to mess with. This was modern, high-scoring baseball, when single runs don't matter as much as they did in Babe Ruth's day. Get used to it.

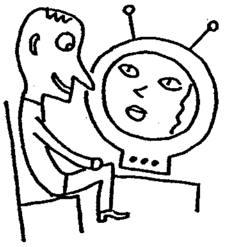
Bonds drew four more walks and a plunk on the side (another form of free pass) across the remainder of this game and the next two, while the Giants finished their sweep and at last knocked the Mets out of first place. Bonds's only hit of the series was a solo homer against Pedro Astacio in the finale—a short-stroke flick of the bat that sent the ball over the left-center-field wall—which began a three-run game-tying rally by the Giants. I was watching via television, and while the Mets commentators made much of this dinger and an earlier Mo Vaughn shot off the scoreboard, nobody said anything about a walk to Bonds in his next at-bat beyond oohing over Astacio's first fling, high and inside, which put Barry in the dirt. None of the next three pitches came close to the strike zone, and the walk moved up a prior base runner, Rich Aurilia, who soon became the winning run. Bonds was unperturbed by the knockdown. "Who's winning?" he said to the reporters in the clubhouse. "That's all that matters." It was the only visit to Shea that the Giants and Bonds will make this year, but, thanks to interleague play, he will be unexpectedly on view at Yankee Stadium on June 7th, 8th, and 9th—back for the bullfight or the baseball.

John Franco, the Mets captain and famous reliever, was lounging on a dugout step just after the early Bonds press conference, and when someone repeated Barry's "I don't have enough games in my body to get there" line to him he made a dismissive little violin-playing gesture. Old pros are hard on each other, and Franco had something nearer than Hank Aaron on his mind. The next day, Mets general manager Steve Phillips broke the bad news: an MRI had disclosed that Franco's medial collateral ligament and flexor tendon had pulled loose from the bone in his elbow, and that he would require a ligament replacement (the "Tommy John" operation) and a year to fifteen months of rehabilitation if he was ever to pitch again. Franco, who is forty-one, said he was thinking it over. Meeting the writers the next afternoon, he broke down in tears when he told us that, when he'd got home the previous night, after the news was out, his ten-year-old son, J.J., had asked, "Is it my fault because we played catch the day before?"

Franco's tears and toughness came as no surprise. A five-ten (at best) lefty reliever and stopper, he has compiled eighteen years in the majors and four hundred and twenty-two saves on attitude and a cutter. No fastball. He's a local guy all the way, the son of a city sanitation worker and a product of Lafayette High and St. John's University. Watching him at work all this time—he came aboard the Mets in 1990—you understood always that he would be only just good enough for the crisis at hand. Even when he closed the deal—got rid of the last batter of the day on a changeup and came down off the mound yelling and punching the air—he looked more human than triumphant: a Met like the rest of us, living out his wildest dream. Catching him again here, perhaps for the thousandth time, I saw that his snapping dark eyes, the cool little head loll, the tongue that rolls out in the middle of a laugh, the dismissive "Naah!," and the rest—clean-line haircut and a downturned dark mustache—were all New York, but of a kind we know better now than we used to. He's a firefighter.

Franco decided to have the operation and hopes to rejoin the Mets by July or August next year. I hope he can do it, too, but I wish even more that he'd stop now and let himself up a little. Grant Roberts, a twenty-four-year-old bullpen teammate of Franco's, said, "I've loved just seeing him here every day," which is my thought exactly. My Mets friends Gerry and Barbara and Peter and Brooke and my wife, Carol, and I will talk about Franco in the stands at Shea, while things go from worse to worse. The other day, Alomar and Ordóñez pulled off a breathtaking play behind second base against the Colorado Rockies—a behind-the-back flip from Robbie to the outstretched Rey. Two innings later, Ordóñez made a throwing error, and then Alomar threw a routine double-play toss past Mo Vaughn at first. Lately, with nobody hitting, the Mets lost eight out of nine games, to reach the .500 level: official mediocrity. Then Pedro Astacio and Jeff D'Amico threw back-to-back two-hit shutouts against the Dodgers. Who needs hitting?

Baseball weirdness abounds—the Marlins drew a home crowd of 5,461 the day they took over first place in the N.L. East—and attendance is seriously down in nine big-league cities. Maybe gloomy Bud Selig is right. Everybody wants to see a winner but we only want a win. Baseball at Shea gives you a lot of between-time, and we're working on Mr. Met's love life, and our all-time team made up of players with girls' names—Pete Rose, Mark Grace, Babe Ruth, and this guy on the Brewers Mark Loretta, and the rest—and what do you suppose happens to marriages that begin with those scoreboard proposals: "Cheryl Will You Marry Me?" Let's go, Mo. ♦



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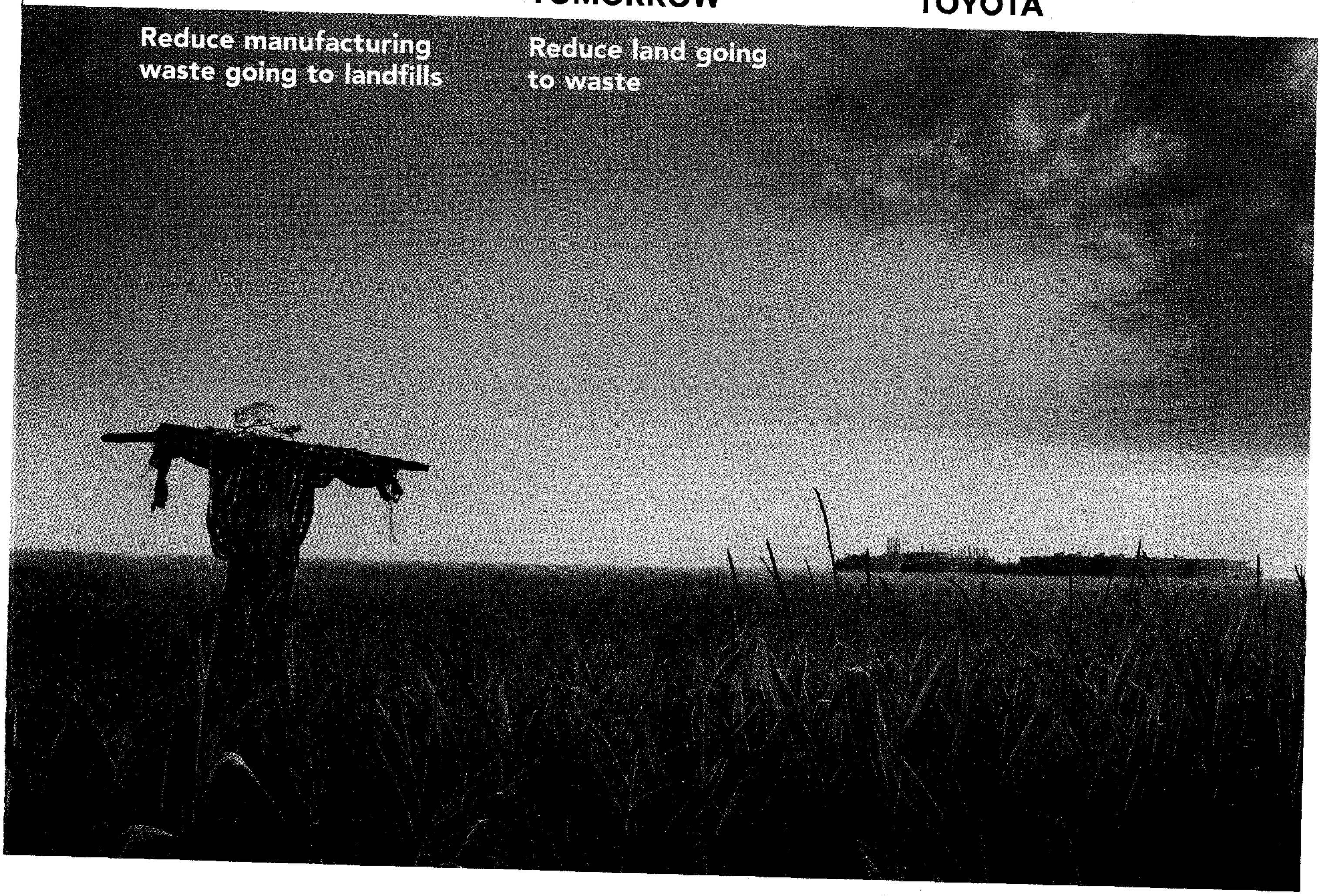

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DEPT. OF MARKETING

FASTER FOOD

A British sandwich phenomenon tries to make it in New York.

BY IAN PARKER

One morning a few weeks ago, Morag McCay and Emma Blackmore sat in a windowless conference room in an office in midtown Manhattan. On a long table in front of them were forty or so sandwiches that had been bought that day from nearby food chains, and now lay in lines, anchored in place with yellow tape, looking like recovered goods at a police press conference. In London, McCay and Blackmore decide the taste of lunch: they are the group marketing director and the international development chef, respectively, of the leading British fast-food sandwich chain, Pret a Manger, which in its home market has a street-corner dominance comparable to that of Duane Reade in Manhattan. Blackmore, who is thirty and easygoing, and McCay, a dry, amused woman in her forties, who was wearing a touch of bright-turquoise eyeliner, had flown in from London the previous day, as part of their company's aggressive (and some say foolhardy) assault on the New York lunch business. Since January, Pret a Manger has opened six shops in midtown; there will be ten more in the city by the end of the year. During their visit, McCay and Blackmore were considering, among other things, possible American deviations from Pret a Manger's British menu—asking themselves questions like "Will New Yorkers eat crayfish?" This morning, they were holding a "comparative tasting" to learn more about their competition. With apologies, they reached for what they called their "spit cups."

The table—with its grid of wraps and subs, its geological layers of arugula and sliced turkey—was a map of what could be called a sandwich war. It illustrated a story of intensifying competition for market share in what the trade calls "fast-casual" or "adult limited-service" dining; that is, restaurants that offer something more than a hamburger but less than a waiter. The sector includes Hale and Hearty Soups and the Panera Bread chain of cafés but not, say, the thirteen thousand outlets of Subway, although Subway's new television advertisements, which promise "classic Italian" bread, hint at the commercial appeal of the category. "Fast-casual—everybody wants to say they're in it," Dennis Lombardi, a vice-president of the Chicago-based food-service consulting company Technomic, told me. Fast-casual was worth $2.75 billion in 2001, and is growing more quickly—at an estimated annual rate of between six and eight per cent—than any other sector in the restaurant market; its leading product is the upscale sandwich. In New York, the idea is best represented by Cosí, the chain known for its flat "artisan" bread, which is baked, theatrically, in open brick ovens. Fast-casual serves those who grew up surrounded by American fast food but whose tastes have come to include roasted red peppers; they have at least momentary thoughts about fat content and mad-cow disease. They have seen the couch in Central Perk on "Friends."

In recent years, these consumers have begun to force diversification on the fast-food giants, and have inspired the growth of chains like Cosí and Panera. There now seems to be an opportunity to own the five- or six-dollar sandwich the way Starbucks owns the three-dollar cup of coffee. A company with energy and resources could reach for the great prize—national dominance. "Every neighborhood in America needs a Cosí," Andy Stenzler, the company's thirty-four-year-old C.E.O., told me.

At the tasting, there were sandwiches from Pret a Manger, Pax, Café Metro, and Au Bon Pain, among others. The two women, taking notes, first judged the sandwiches by sight alone, following printed company suggestions ("Defining Pret Food") that encourage tasters to give sandwiches human characteristics. "This one is 'I've got a hangover. I'm falling off the sofa,' " Blackmore said, pointing to a bulge of avocado. She turned to another bright and inviting "gourmet" sandwich: "He's all surface. Quite smart, but there's no depth." After a pause, McCay compared an egg-mayonnaise sandwich to her mother-in-law.

The London tastemakers thought the American competition looked unsubtle. The sandwiches bluntly told the story of their construction—one ingredient laid on another. They had no "intrigue," McCay said. She lifted a four-inch tower of avocado, alfalfa, tomato, and cheese. "How do you eat this? Really, show me how. I can't eat it. Oh God. Oh." She ate. "What happens is, you get a mouthful of cheese, or of sprouts—only one ingredient. And it's got a fridge taste. You know that fridge taste?" She delicately released her mouthful into the spit cup.

PRET A MANGER
COSI SANDWICH BAR

"Everybody we spoke to who's from New York said, 'Nice concept, but it won't work here,'" a Pret a Manger executive said.

BARRY BLITT

Beside their bold, abundant American cousins, the Pret a Manger sandwiches had a neat, earnest restraint that fell just short of snootiness: slices of square malted-grain bread (specially made for the company in Brooklyn), holding an inch or less of evenly placed filling, cut into two right-angled triangles, and packed into a white cardboard box with a cellophane window. The company makes sandwiches without "obscure chemicals"; its eggs are free-range. On the table, there was a Super Club sandwich, with chicken and bacon, which is a Pret a Manger best-seller; an egg and roasted tomatoes; an avocado with Parmesan, arugula, and pine nuts; and so on. McCay and Blackmore spoke of them admiringly as "blends"—not towers—of carefully researched ingredients. (Staff are taught how to shake an exact "shiver" of seasoning.) Pret a Manger's sandwiches come out of a known sandwich tradition—chicken, cheese, tuna—which the company hopes to riff on without succumbing to contrivance (an important word of censure within the company). Tasting one of her own sandwiches, Blackmore said, "I think it has a natural complexity. It's not complexity for complexity's sake. Not a twist of this and vine-ripened that."

While the other sandwiches on the table came from made-to-order environments of infinite choice (even if they had not, in fact, been made to order), Pret a Manger's sandwiches are made daily in a kitchen in each shop, packaged, and then carried to a metal shelving unit at the front—a bright, industrial, steel-clad space, with a few high stools by the window, where somebody could have made a Duran Duran video in 1985. At Pret a Manger, customers must choose a sandwich from those on the shelves, and may not ask for extra cheese. And, because nobody else is asking for extra cheese, the line moves quickly: the company rule is that it should take no longer than ninety seconds for someone to buy a sandwich. By avoiding the line at the deli next door, customers save ten minutes of their lunch break. In the American Pret a Manger office, this is called the "time trade-off": control traded for time. A few weeks before the tasting, I met Andrew Rolfe, Pret a Manger's thirty-five-year-old chairman and C.E.O., a tall and dashing South African (and Rhodes Scholar). "Before we came, everybody we spoke to who's from New York said, 'Nice concept, but it won't work here,'" he recalled. "They told us, 'Americans want to go to their deli and have their sandwich made their way.' That was all we heard." He laughed. "We said, 'We're going to do it our way and see what happens.'"

Not long ago, I split a pastrami-on-rye sandwich with Andrew F. Smith, who has made a career as a respected scholar of American food without giving up his day job as the president of a nonprofit educational organization. He has written books on peanuts, tomatoes, and popcorn, and is researching the entry on sandwiches for a Scribners Encyclopedia of Food. We sat at the back of the Carnegie Deli, on Seventh Avenue, among people taking photographs of their inability to finish lunch. (The Carnegie Deli makes the case that the history of New York is bound up with sandwiches that are tall enough to make people laugh.) Smith ate from a half-pound of pastrami with professional approval but no obvious gusto.

Smith likes to demolish food-creation myths, and he had half-hoped that his research into the history of the sandwich would lead him to contest the idea that John Montagu, the Fourth Earl of

Sandwich, was the first man to think of bread-something-bread, in 1762. The story, first published in the third edition of Samuel Johnson's Dictionary, in 1768, has it that Montagu had been so gripped by a game of cards that he would not leave the table for dinner, and asked to be brought meat held between two slices of bread. While Smith never doubted that Montagu had started a "food fad," he has come to believe that there was no prior sandwich. "There had been flatbreads forever," Smith told me. "You might have folded them over something, or opened them up, made a pocket. And *tortillas*. If you consider those to be sandwiches, fine. But I don't. And I've looked in vain to find two pieces of bread around something, before this."

In America and Britain, "sandwich" came to describe both a rough-hewn bar snack and a dainty teatime dish of the kind described in nineteenth-century cookbooks. According to Smith, the upscale tradition largely died away in the United States after the First World War, when the sandwich became established as a working-class standard, its ubiquity linked to the development of artificial preservatives, the recent appearance of commercial mayonnaise, and, in 1928, the invention of the bread-slicing machine. By the end of the nineteen-twenties, a sandwich looked much like a modern sandwich: a practical envelope, with the atavistic sensual advantage that at every bite you got more than a forkful of food in front of your face, as Cara De Silva, a New York-based food historian, pointed out to me.

Sandwich consumption rose during the Depression—"You can put anything in a sandwich and it will fill you up," Smith says—before losing out to hamburgers when meat rationing ended after the Second World War; as a proportion of meals eaten, it has never matched its prewar high. But a child growing up in the nineteen-fifties, as Andrew Smith did, would not have noticed a slump. "My first thirteen years of life I ate a sandwich five out of seven days," he said. "It was something I could do on my own. If I wanted to pile on the peanut butter, I could pile on the peanut butter and nobody was looking."

This points to a difficulty Pret a Manger faces as it tries to take over the fast-casual sandwich market. A customer's control over his sandwich is a link to a powerful childhood satisfaction. And most sandwiches are still made at home. According to Harry Balzer, who tracks eating habits for the New York-based research company NPD Group, thirty-six per cent of lunches at home involve sandwiches (the three most popular fillings being, in order, ham, peanut butter and jelly, and turkey). Everyone is a sandwich expert. There's a marked difference between a New Yorker at the head of a traditional sandwich line (who has all the time in the world to build his lunch) and that same person one place back, a moment before (who is being driven crazy by people with all the time in the world). "People think, I know the right way to make my sandwich," Andrew Rolfe, of Pret a Manger, says. "Well, actually, they don't. We do. That's what we do. We make sandwiches." Pret a Manger makes them hygienically, with great precision, and with reference to instructions on a laminated card with color photographs. "1. Lay out the granary bread on the bench. 2. Mix the chicken and the Thai Green Dressing in a bowl. 3. Using a 16 scoop, portion chicken mix out evenly. 4. Spread to all edges using two forks."

"Got him!"

London in the nineteen-eighties could be a raw, dispiriting place, and a young man looking for lunch would probably find himself in a narrow sandwich shop with two or three Formica-topped tables and a line, wreathed in cigarette smoke, running out the door into the rain. "There were normally half a dozen plates of fillings—in two styles," Sinclair Beecham, the co-founder of Pret a Manger, recalled when I met him recently for breakfast. "One was the overcooked meats, of the cheapest quality, normally pressed, and pumped, with many, many preservatives and additives for color and taste. Then there were piles of paste that were either a mixture of mashed chicken and cheap mayonnaise and flavoring of some sort or tuna and sweet corn and diced pepper. And you'd get a scoop of these squished between two slices of white or brown bread."

Beecham is a laid-back man of forty-three, with a House of Windsor accent—"Yah" for yes—which derives from a boarding-school education and a father in the military. He worked in a bank, and then studied property management at a vocational school, where he met Pret a Manger's other co-founder, Julian Metcalfe, who is the more flamboyant of the two. (Metcalfe later had a car made for himself in the shape of a sandwich.) After graduating, Beecham and Metcalfe ran a liquor store together but became discouraged by low margins and repeated thefts. In 1986, they bought a shop in Central London, in a neighborhood dominated by government departments and multinational corporations. They put in stainless-steel floors and walls, and acquired their name (sloppy French for "ready to eat") from a recently failed food store in North London. "What we were trying to do with the metal and the name—we wanted to be what France is to food and what America is to service," Beecham says.

By the mid-nineteen-nineties, Pret a Manger—"Pret" to students and City traders alike—had become a national fast-food chain of forty stores. Posters on the walls spoke of Pret a Manger's "fresh" and "natural" approach. Napkins explained, "We do not operate a central production factory nor do we employ mass production techniques." At the end of each day, unsold sandwiches were given to charity. Pret a Manger was Ben and Jerry's, without beards: positioning itself as clean, healthy, modern, conscientious, and adventurous in matters of taste, but not overly so. (In 1997, when Tony Blair was elected Prime Minister on a similar ticket, he was said to request deliveries of Pret a Manger sandwiches to 10 Downing Street.)

Pret a Manger was an urban concept, and, as the company grew to a hundred and twenty shops, it exhausted the number of British cities large enough to support it. It also expanded beyond the managerial capabilities of the founders. In 1998, Metcalfe and Beecham took a step back, and asked Andrew Rolfe, who had worked for PepsiCo and had run Kentucky Fried Chicken in Britain, to join them as a partner and C.E.O. "It was a wonderful brand, but the business was chaotic," Rolfe says now. As he brought order—new training manuals and I.T. systems—to the company, the possibility of international growth seemed increasingly attractive. Rolfe knew America, he was married to an American, and he had watched Manhattan office workers consider joining a deli-sandwich queue, look at their watches, and walk on. In 1999, he asked Beecham to set up the first Pret a Manger shop in New York.

Sinclair Beecham arrived in New York that fall, to an industry that cared little about the number of shops he had in Britain. He had no leverage in the city's monolithic and inflexible food-distribution system. One distributor, hearing of Beecham's plans for expansion, simply cried, "An English sandwich shop!" and started laughing.

Beecham recruited Monica Gelinas, a

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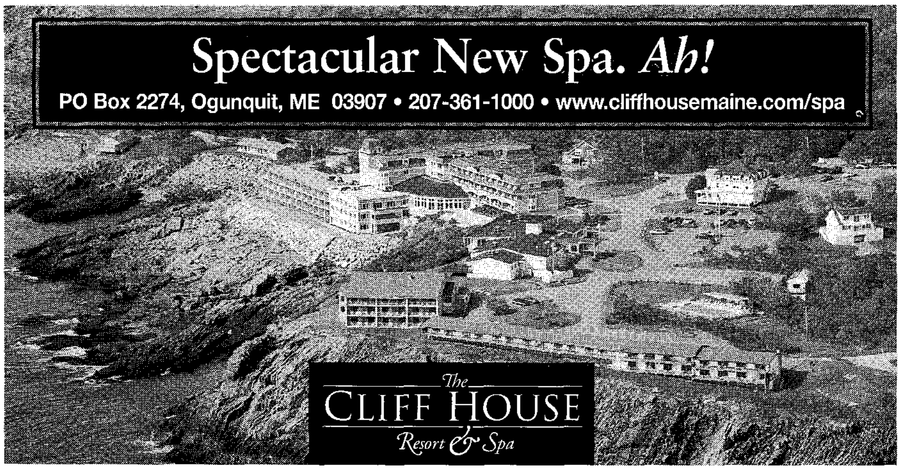

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smart, idealistic woman from Rutherford, New Jersey, who was twenty-two, and had just graduated from Cornell's hotel school. He made her his effective partner in the buildup to the company's launch in New York. "I became a food talent scout," Gelinas says now, recalling long trips to farms and food warehouses. "All I could think about were ingredients. I wouldn't be able to sleep. I had nightmares about trying to find watercress."

As the opening of the first American shop, on Broad Street, approached, Gelinas and Beecham found that they disagreed about what an American sandwich was, and what a New York Pret a Manger could be. Beecham had wanted to reproduce the London store. Gelinas pressed for New York customization: bagels and drip coffee, for example, neither of which was available in London. "It was 'Come on, you're being too British. You *need* a condiment station,'" Gelinas told me. When the shop opened, in July, 2000, she had won those arguments, and space that in London would have gone to stools and tables had been given to a self-serve coffee station and lemon wedges.

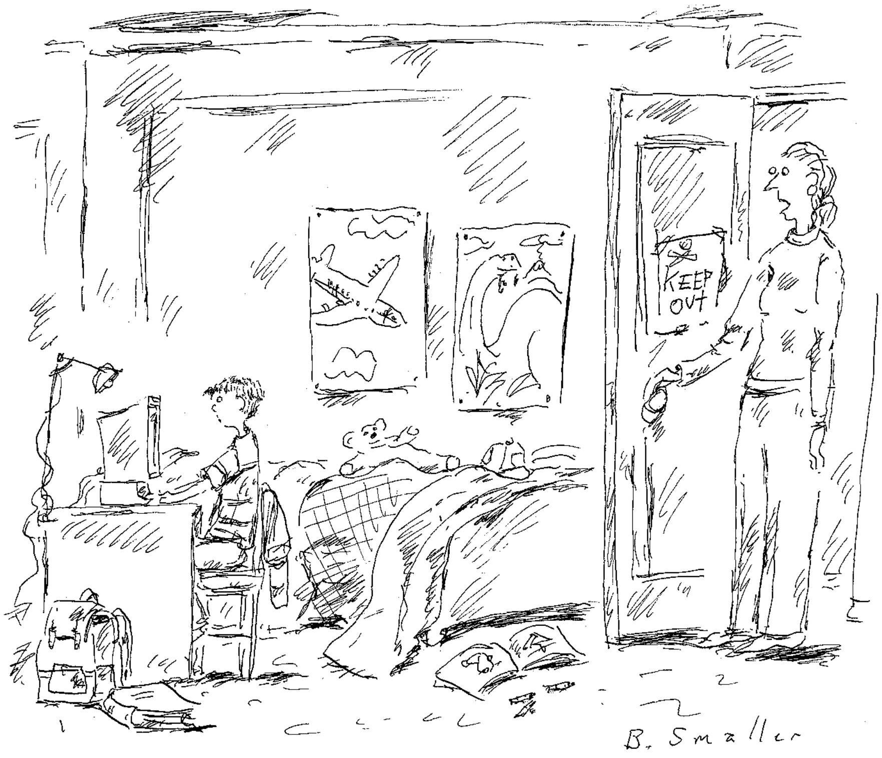
The shop was not an immediate success. "It was way too big," Rolfe says. "And the food wasn't right." (Americans, it turned out, like a "drier eat" than the British—less mayonnaise.) But the Broad Street shop had been intended as much as a pitch to potential investors as anything else. The company had global ambitions and, as Beecham put it, was trying to send a message: "We've got one shop, these are our sales volumes, we think this has got potential."

The most natural partner for Pret a Manger's expansion was also the most unnatural—McDonald's. "In our sector, there really is only one player that has succeeded internationally," Rolfe says. In January of last year, he announced that McDonald's—which is now moving into what it calls other "meal occasions"—had bought a thirty-three-per-cent stake in the company, adding Pret to a portfolio that includes Donato's Pizza and the burrito chain Chipotle. (McDonald's has an option to buy the company outright in 2005.) To many of Pret a Manger's British customers, this was astonishing news. The company had marketed itself as an anti-McDonald's. It was a friend to vegans, good to its employees, and (best of all) not American. The *Guardian* wrote that the sale signalled the end to a "brilliantly constructed illusion."

A few weeks ago, a new Pret a Manger opened on Lexington Avenue at Fifty-fourth street. At the end of the day, after the shop was closed, ten or so young employees waited for a "graduation ceremony" with the smiling resignation of teen-agers about to see their parents dance in public. Staff arrived from Pret a Manger's head office, and, at about four o'clock, Tunde Williams, a Pret a Manger "team leader," sprang out of the kitchen wearing fabric wings and a wedding veil. Dividing the room into men and women, he ran a "blind date" contest that ended with a shy young man being mock-handcuffed to Pret a Manger's recruitment manager. In a speech, Jay Willoughby, the president of Pret a Manger U.S.A., extolled the virtues of the company. (It had recently been named one of the ten best companies to work for in Europe, along with L'Oréal, Porsche, and Morgan Stanley.) Then people began to drink cans of Budweiser, and eventually someone removed the plastic handcuffs.

There have been similar scenes in midtown Manhattan every month this year. Shops have opened at Madison and Fortieth; at Seventh and Thirty-ninth; and across from Bryant Park, right next door to Cosí. It is too soon to know if the Pret a Manger model will take hold in New York—or in Hong Kong or Japan, where it is also being tested this year. Its self-service starkness seems almost scornful of mainstream fast-casual fashion, even if it is counterbalanced by a conversational corporate tone. (Sandwiches returning to stores after a seasonal break bear stickers reading "I'm back!") When I had coffee with Monica Gelinas in a Cosí on Forty-fifth Street, she noted, with impatience, its disorderly queuing system. "Are the different lines supposed to create some kind of theatre? It doesn't do anything for me. Here's where the guy makes you a sandwich, you work your way up, and then there's another coffee-and-tea area, and a checkout area? I think it's very chaotic. Pret is so organized and anal." She laughed. "I already have enough to be confused about without my eating experience being frustrated."

McDonald's is confident that Pret a



"Why don't you get off the computer and watch some TV?"

• •

Manger can grow into a major international brand, and Andrew Rolfe plans for two hundred stores in Manhattan alone. But the case for the prepackaged sandwich has not yet been won in America. Briazz, a sandwich chain founded in 1996 by a Seattle-based businessman named Victor Alhadeff and closely modelled on Pret a Manger, has lost more than forty million dollars. The company's emphasis is now on pricier grilled "paninis" rather than on prepackaged sandwiches, and its business model is closer to Cosí's or Panera's than to Pret a Manger's. Pret a Manger is a curious brand for America—fresh but prepackaged, "natural" but industrial, a little short on the fillings—and, in dissenting from this country's culinary creed of abundance and transparency, it is either brilliantly post-fast-casual or else has missed the point. "God bless them, I hope they do great," Andy Stenzler, of Cosí, said. "But I think it'll be very challenging for them."

Last winter, the New York office made a successful case for the American range to include a pastrami sandwich, despite British objections. At a recent meeting in midtown, McCay and some American colleagues considered, among other things, the Pret a Manger crayfish sandwich. A sample had been prepared: firm miniature lobster tails with arugula and mayonnaise. As McCay reminded the room, crayfish had been introduced to the British Pret a Manger repertoire two years ago, when Britons barely knew the product, and has now become Pret a Manger's most popular filling. But crayfish has met resistance in the New York office. Jay Willoughby, the American boss, has said that the product seems expensive, difficult to supply, and "unmanly"—too fussy for New York tastes. "Can you tell how much I've had it with crayfish?" Monica Gelinas recently said to me, smiling. But, as sandwiches were passed around the room, McCay was upbeat. "Crayfish is the next version of prawn, but with taste and bite," she said. The Americans admired the taste and bite. "Did anybody else think it was a bit sweet?" one said. "I think the mayo is a bit heavy, to tell the truth," another said. The recipe was adjusted. The sandwich, launched this week in New York, contains ten per cent more crayfish and twenty-five per cent less mayonnaise than its British equivalent. ♦

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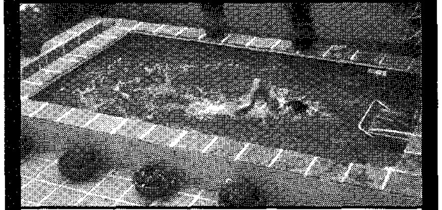

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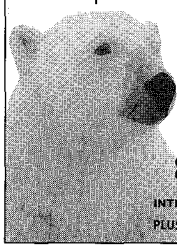

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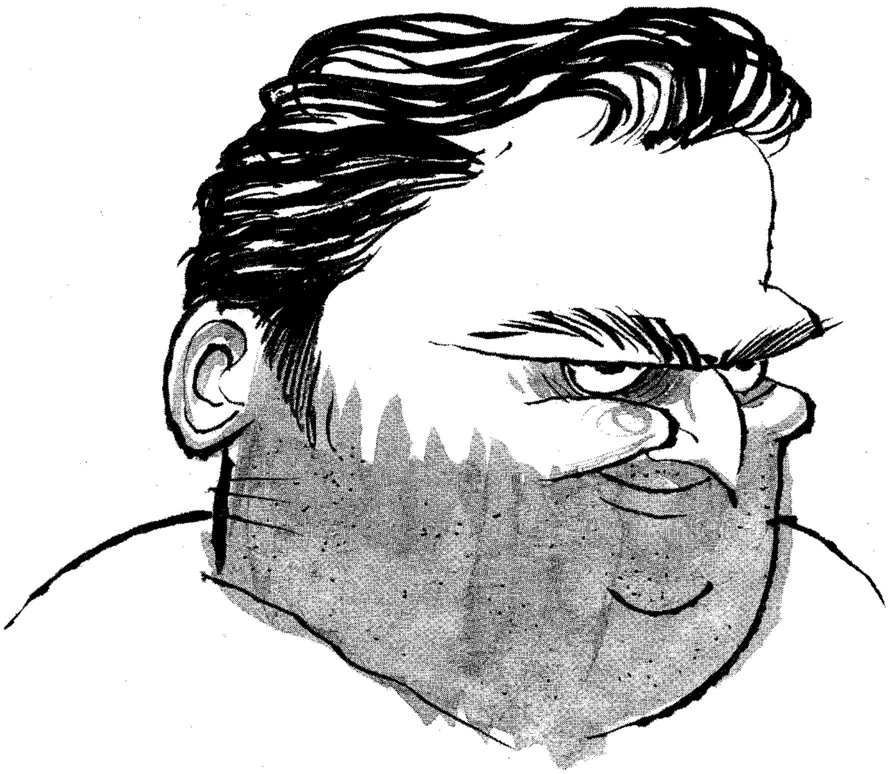
MOODY TOONS

The king of the Cartoon Network.

BY ALEC WILKINSON

The sleekest, subtlest, and most subversive animated series on television is "Samurai Jack," which is broadcast on the Cartoon Network. It was created by Genndy Tartakovsky, who arrived in America from Russia with his parents and his older brother twenty-four years ago, when he was seven. "Samurai Jack" is not Tartakovsky's first show. He is also the creator of the network's most popular cartoon, "Dexter's Laboratory," which is about a boxy little runt of a boy named Dexter who has red hair, glasses with heavy black frames, and a high, raspy voice. He wears a chemist's tunic, rubber gloves, and pointed black boots, which disappear beneath the tunic's hem, and he has a secret laboratory behind a bookcase in his bedroom. Dee Dee, his doltish and bratty older sister, is the only other person who knows where the entrance to the lab is. She likes to go in there when Dexter's not around and mess things up.



Once Genndy Tartakovsky came to America, he couldn't stop watching cartoons.

DAN KRALL

"Dexter's Laboratory" is watched mainly by children between the ages of two and eleven. "Samurai Jack" is intended for children between nine and fourteen. I know about Tartakovsky because my son, who is eight, used to watch "Dexter." The idea of having a laboratory, especially a secret one, appealed to his imagination, and for a while he pretended to have one of his own and talked about the inventions he was working on. The most elaborate of these was a device he called a wishing machine, which he hoped would bring his pet chameleon back to life. Last summer, when he saw a commercial announcing the first episode of "Samurai Jack," he said, "I'd like to watch that."

"Samurai Jack" is moody and atmospheric and hardly ever has gags. It takes place in the future, to which Jack has been banished by Aku, a demon whose body is long and supple and whose eyebrows are little crescents of fire that burn even underwater. Most of the show's characters are robots or aliens or creatures with magical attributes. They wander through forests and pastoral landscapes, or live in cities where there are flying cars equipped, like fighter planes, with weapons to shoot each other down. Aku is in charge. Everyone knows his name, and in the capital his image is everywhere. He can change into any creature he cares to, and he lives in a tower that he moves whenever he feels like it, so that no one knows for long where he is. When Aku is summoned by the few creatures who manage to enter the tower, he appears from its depths, annoyed at being disturbed. A typical episode portrays an attempt Jack makes to defeat Aku, or something he does in the hope of getting home—for example, a pilgrimage he makes to a wishing well, guarded by three blind archers who depend on their hearing and never miss. "Samurai Jack" is not science fiction, and it's not romance. It's a show about having adventures, and it's serious in a way that my son appreciates; it provides a version of the world that is larger and more mysterious than the one he has hold of, and it's thrilling without being scary.

"Samurai Jack" doesn't resemble any other cartoon on television. To begin with, Jack almost never speaks. Few of the other characters do, either. Each episode, minus the commercials, is about twenty-two minutes long. One of them has only two minutes of dialogue. The backgrounds in cartoons are generally a wash of color, with a few houses and trees—and there goes Huckleberry Hound walking through. In "Samurai Jack," Tartakovsky uses patterns of light and color and the arrangement of objects—the serrated profile of a city, like teeth on a saw blade, or the stillness of a landscape—to convey his hero's sense of displacement and to help tell the story. Some of the backgrounds are elaborately drawn; others are minimal. The look of the show is always changing, because Tartakovsky encourages each artist to handle an assignment according to his own taste.

Most cartoon figures are drawn from templates, so that a character's proportions are unvarying. They also have a black outline. The figures in "Jack" are less rigorously drawn, and none of them have an outline. When Tartakovsky was planning the show, he watched a Japanese animated movie from the sixties called "The Little Prince and the Eight-Headed Dragon," about a boy on a quest to find his mother's soul. The print was so worn that the black lines around the figures had faded, an effect that seemed to make them more lifelike and more firmly a part of the frame. Given Samurai Jack's taciturnity, Tartakovsky decided that he could best express himself through his eyes, which are larger than the eyes of most action cartoon characters. Tartakovsky observed that the movie stars he most enjoyed watching—Brando, Newman, Redford, Nicholson, and especially Eastwood—all had a riveting gaze. Nearly every episode of "Samurai Jack" includes sequences in which the hero's eyes occupy the entire screen.

Another of the show's seductive qualities is its unhurried pace. Tartakovsky does not care for the vogue, derived from MTV, of creating images so fleeting that they barely register in the viewer's mind. He prefers to wait quietly for them to emerge, like cards being dealt. "The point is to have your eye relax," he says. "Too much superfluous activity in the frame makes you feel as if you're constantly trying to catch up."

Tartakovsky thought that the action shows he watched as a boy contained too much talking, and had plots that were needlessly complicated. Rather than have twists and reversals occupy the bulk of a show and leave only a few minutes for a battle, he decided to have a simple story serve as the occasion for a long battle. The outline for one episode of "Samurai Jack" reads, "After Jack builds weapons, twenty minutes of fighting." For another, the storyboards show ninety-nine panels of arrows in flight. Tartakovsky wanted the narratives to advance through elements that would be taken in more by the eye than by the ear. He didn't want to have to spell everything out. What he hoped was that the show would be sufficiently compelling that viewers couldn't look away.

Tartakovsky is portly. From the back, he appears to have the dimensions of a large appliance—a refrigerator, perhaps. He looks a little like an inflated version of Dexter. He has dark eyes and wavy black hair held in place with a tonic that makes it shine. By the middle of the morning, a lock falls loose and hangs across his forehead, like an apostrophe. His sideburns are cut to spiky points, like those of rockabilly singers. His face is wide and square, his nose is sharp, and his mouth and his eyes are small. He wears shorts year-round. (He thinks that people in Los Angeles, where he lives, are oversensitive to the cold.) He usually wears button-down shirts, with the tails hanging out and the sleeves buttoned, and when he's anxious or distracted he tends to ball his fists and wrap his fingers around his shirt cuffs. A few years ago, he became fond of Latin music and bought hundreds of CDs. For years, he had felt that the timing in cartoons works best on a four-beat cycle, and the rhythms he heard in Latin music inspired him to try more complicated patterns of action. To immerse himself in the music, he took classes in Latin dance, which brings to mind the image of a dancing Russian bear in a circus, making delicate little steps beside its trainer.

In December, I spent a few days with Tartakovsky at the Cartoon Network studios in Burbank, California, so I know that he was born in Moscow in 1970. He recalls being taken to school in the winter by his mother, Miriam. At the intersection of any large streets, there was a booth with a policeman inside. "This is when the country was still Communistic," he said. His father, Boris, was a dentist in charge of a clinic that employed twenty or thirty other dentists. He looked after the teeth of the Russian hockey team. One day, a Cabinet minister needed work done and soldiers surrounded the clinic; no one else was allowed to see patients while Tartakovsky's father attended him. One of the privileges that Boris's position conferred was a three-bedroom apartment. "I remember being happy, and having caviar almost every morning," Tar-

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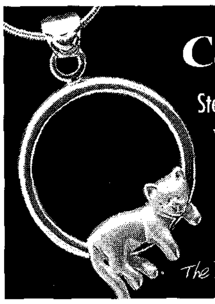

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takovsky said. “Over there it is so common. Instead of having cereal, you have caviar for breakfast.”

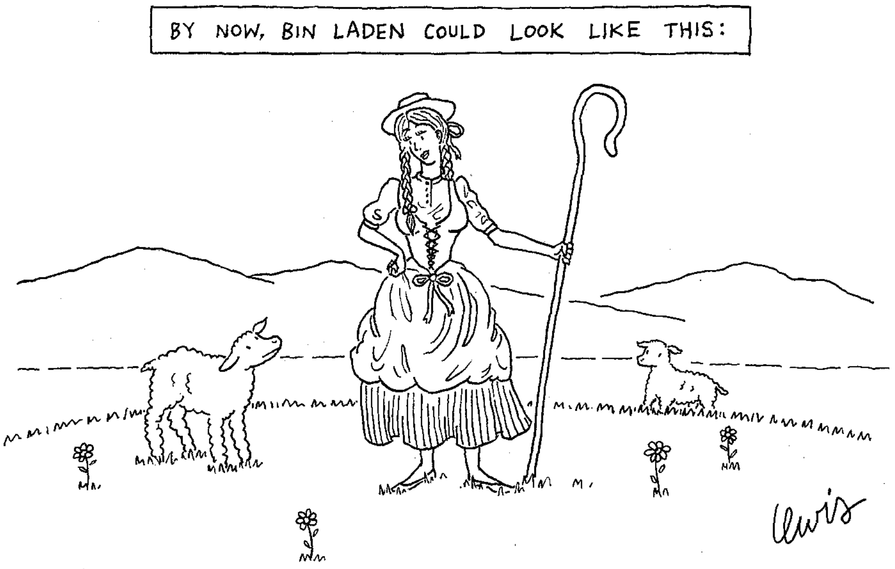
Tartakovsky’s parents were Jewish, and they worried that anti-Semitism would shadow the lives of Genndy and his brother, Alex, who is two years older, so they emigrated in 1976. “It was like packing up your house—fifteen suitcases, and you had to carry everything,” Tartakovsky said. “We stayed three months in Italy, waiting for papers, mostly in Florence and a little bit in Rome. There was a place where people would go with their bags—a flea market. It was called Americana, because everyone taking part was on their way to America. So you had people from twenty countries selling their things. They would lay their bags on the ground and open them. My uncle had a toy-train collection, and he sold it for five thousand dollars.”

Alex, who is a computer consultant in Chicago, told me that he and Genndy used to hang around the flea market. They often tagged along with an older Russian girl, who liked to draw pictures of scenes she observed. “We imitated her making sketches like you take photographs,” Alex said. “Then Genndy started drawing figures from American comic books someone was selling, and that was the main thing that became interesting to us. Just looking at the figures and then drawing pictures.”

The Tartakovskys moved to Columbus, Ohio, where they were no longer prosperous. “It was the opposite,” Genndy said, “because the license didn’t work here. My father became a dental technician. He made dentures and fake teeth and caps. I knew ‘moon’ and ‘cow’—what a baby would know.” The first thing to absorb him was television. When I asked Tartakovsky how long he had been in America before he began watching television, he said, “Like a day.” He said that once he started watching television, and especially cartoons, he couldn’t seem to stop.

“In Russia, TV was very limited,” he said. “There were a lot of news programs and one cartoon called, well, I guess a translation is something like ‘Wait Till I Get You Now.’ It involved a wolf who chased a rabbit. A chain-smoking wolf with a gruff voice, and a cute little rabbit. It was a Road Runner type of thing, but hard and really uncomfortably violent. The wolf was like a real man getting hurt.”

Each day, before leaving for school, Tartakovsky watched cartoons, and on Saturdays he would get up early, study the listings of cartoons in the paper, and plan a schedule for the morning, always ending with “Soul Train.” He believes that during this period he watched every cartoon ever made. No one he knew shared this preoccupation, and as he got older he felt obliged to conceal it. “Imagine you’re a high-school kid, and you get drunk on Friday nights—whatever high-school kids do—only Saturday morning I would wake up early and watch cartoons,” he said. “With a hangover. When I watched them, I wasn’t tired. I was very excited. I remember at sixteen sneaking off to watch animated films like ‘The Jungle Book,’ sitting in a theatre full of kids and being much bigger than everyone else.”


BY NOW, BIN LADEN COULD LOOK LIKE THIS:
Lewis

When Tartakovsky was ten years old, his family moved to Chicago, where his father knew other Russians. “Once we got to Chicago, I started to recognize cliques—the cool people, the cutest girls, the guys who were athletic,” he said. “I wore dumpy clothes—my dad’s shirts that were too big for me. My mom and dad didn’t understand the allure of brand names. There were five or ten Russian kids in the school, but I didn’t want to know them. They listened to European dance music. They always dressed in black and wore slacks and shirts, and drank liquor, instead of wearing jeans and a T-shirt and sneakers and having keg parties. I wanted to fit into the cool kids’ world. They were my ideal of what America was. Each night, I would try to watch as much TV as I could, so I would have something to say the next day to the kids in school. I wanted to get as far away from Russia as possible. I didn’t want to be in a dark corner alone.”

Two explanations account for the origins of “Samurai Jack.” The first is that Tartakovsky was taken with the image of a man with a sword. “A warrior with a sword is always exciting,” he said. “The sword and a map and a roundtable of guys who honor a code.” Because the show was intended for children, he couldn’t have the samurai cutting people up. Instead, he had the idea that Jack would fight robots, which suggested the future. He might be banished there by a wizard. To invent the wizard, Tartakovsky began with the name of a figure from Viking mythology, a god of trickery and evil called Loki. Then he tried Ilok, then Koli, and eventually arrived at Aku. The samurai figure would pursue Aku, and in this pursuit sometimes be confronted by Aku, but more often by Aku’s minions—robots in the shape of huge spiders, for example.

The second explanation: “When I was ten or twelve,” Tartakovsky said, “I would have this dream where there was a nuclear holocaust, and America would be blown up, and I would find this samurai sword in the window of a store in downtown Chicago, and I would go to the house of the girl I had a crush on, and we would fight mutants."

Tartakovsky works in a building that is several stories high and the color of a sidewalk. At the top is a small sign that says "Cartoon Network." His office has no window. No secretary sits outside the door; anyone can just walk in and talk to him. The office is furnished with a couch, a television, and shelves of books about samurai swordsmanship and martial arts and cartoon history and videotapes of cartoons and animated movies. On a file cabinet is a set of plastic action figures. The room is like a slot, and contains two desks, both of which Tartakovsky uses when he works. Taped on the walls, in plastic sleeves, are editions of comic books about Dexter and his laboratory.

Every two weeks or so, Tartakovsky meets with the "Dexter" staff—he has turned over the making of the show to other people, but he still oversees it—and they talk about ideas. A story meeting at the Cartoon Network is a little like a playdate, or maybe a child's birthday, because it usually includes pizza. Between ten and twenty artists take part, mostly young men dressed in sneakers and T-shirts and pants with big pockets. Some of them are morose and taciturn and stare at the floor or toward a corner—they're better with images, perhaps, than they are with words; others say nothing until they are asked, at which point they unfold a piece of paper and shrug and say, "I just wrote down a few things," and reel off several inventive and surefire ideas; and a few of them appear to say every thought that comes into their heads. Here are some recent suggestions that Tartakovsky liked:

Dexter and Dee Dee and their mother and father are trapped on a desert island, getting sick from a virus that Dexter was experimenting on.

Dexter puts himself in isolation and starts having wild thoughts.

Dee Dee and Dexter try to run away and end up in a bad part of town.

Dexter's parents move, so he has to give up his lab.

Dexter tries to replace his body with something that he invented and loses it, and he becomes just a head.

Dexter goes to the Department of Motor Vehicles, and, no matter what kind of invention he dreams up, he can't make the time pass any faster.

At a recent meeting, Tartakovsky said, "I'd like to have more Dee Dee ideas. Dee Dee brings home a date, Dexter thinks the guy's going to be a jock, so he's ready to dislike him, and instead he's a smart guy, and Dexter gets a boy crush on him." A young man sitting on the back of a couch with his feet on the cushions looked up skeptically and said, "Define 'boy crush.' "

Throughout his youth, Tartakovsky drew figures from comic books collected by Alex. "I wasn't too creative about coming up with subjects," he said. In the margins of his notebooks, he drew stick figures running back and forth and dunking basketballs, so that when the pages of the books were ruffled the figures appeared to be moving. "All my life I've loved animation," he said. "There was something very satisfying about creating movement."

According to Alex, it wasn't until Genndy was in high school that he began to take art seriously. "Our parents noticed how much he liked to draw, so they brought him to an art teacher," Alex said. "After several classes they asked her opinion, and she said, 'Well, he's no Michelangelo.' What Genndy has in his art is great life. He's not the type of guy who draws vases or a deer."

Nothing interfered with Tartakovsky's affection for cartoons until one night when his father didn't come home for dinner. Boris occasionally played cards with friends and often arrived home late, so no one was concerned when he didn't show up. After a while, though, someone went looking for him, and found him on the floor of his office; he had suffered a heart attack. "My dad stood for strength," Tartakovsky told me. "He was a man's man, very alive, and everybody loved him. He had these big hands, and whenever he smoked, the cigarette always looked like a toothpick.

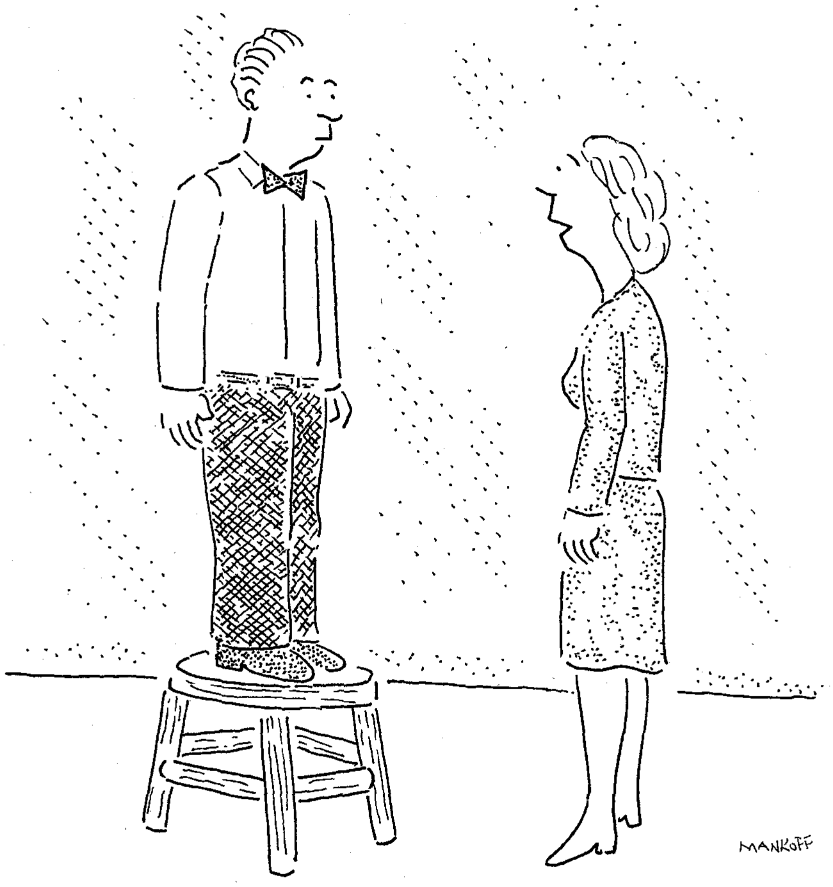
"When he died, everything was topsy-turvy. I was happy just before that; I felt that I was very normal. I played football; I talked almost without an accent. Now I stood out, but for the wrong reasons. Everybody in high school saying they were sorry, and you didn't know who was sincere. When he died, I remember having the TV on and just staring at it blankly."

Tartakovsky finished high school in Chicago. Since there was no local animation industry to speak of, he decided to study advertising art and to make animated films as a hobby. He enrolled at an art-and-film school in downtown Chicago called Columbia College. Meanwhile, he lived with his mother and worked as a cook in a restaurant and as an usher at a theatre. At Columbia, he had a teacher named Stan Hughes, who collected 16-mm. prints of classic cartoons. Tartakovsky used the school's editing machines and advanced the cartoons by hand one frame at a time, and then he drew each frame, paying attention to how the characters moved and how the animators achieved their effects.

His closest friend at Columbia was an animator named Rob Renzetti. Renzetti had applied to the California Institute of the Arts, in Los Angeles, and hadn't got in. One day, he showed Tartakovsky the school's catalogue. "It was like opening the Bible," Tartakovsky recalled. "Everybody I had heard about was on the faculty. It was Walt Disney's school, and I knew it was inaccessible to me." Nevertheless, he suggested to Renzetti that they help each other with their portfolios and apply to CalArts together. Along with his application, Tartakovsky sent a box of his flip books. "When the letter came back from the school, I remember sitting in my car and thinking, This is my future—and being afraid to open it," he said.

When Renzetti got in, too, they drove to California together. At CalArts, Tartakovsky was daunted by the other students. "I couldn't believe how good some people were at eighteen," he said. "I was twenty, and I couldn't draw anywhere near as well as they could. But it wasn't in my nature to quit, so I worked three times as hard."

A pencil test is a short piece of animation made to demonstrate how a character might walk or perform a signal gesture. For a school assignment, Tartakovsky made a pencil test for a tall, gawky girl dressed as a ballerina. She was blond and had pigtails and a high, nasal voice, and she wasn't very bright. Tartakovsky drew one-, two-, and three-second vignettes of her dancing from the foreground to the background. Then he



"Yes, it makes you look taller."

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found himself imagining her opposite: a little brother, short and stubby, who had an obsession with science. In the pencil tests, Dexter has big feet and walks around morosely, like a glum little politburo official.

Tartakovsky could afford only two years at CalArts, but there was so much animation work available that he and Renzetti got jobs in Madrid drawing for the television series "Batman." (The drawing of a cartoon show is often done by artists overseas, where wages are lower than they are in the United States; the finished drawings for "Samurai Jack" are done in Korea.) While Tartakovsky was in Spain, his mother died of cancer. A few months later, the Spanish company he worked for went bankrupt, and he and Renzetti moved back to California, where they found work at Hanna-Barbera Studios. The studio had just begun to discuss the notion that eventually became the Cartoon Network. Forty-eight animators were asked to provide seven-minute pilots. Tartakovsky had shown the pencil tests of Dexter and Dee Dee to an executive named Mike Lazzo, who invited him to pitch the idea of a show about the two characters. In the pilot, Dexter and Dee Dee fight for control of a shape-shifting device that Dee Dee has taken from Dexter's lab. The device is about the size of a cigarette pack and has a red button in the center. Each time one of them points the device at the other and clicks the button, the other turns into a whale or a duck or a snake or a dinosaur. In the meantime, their mother wonders what's keeping them from getting ready for school.

"When it came in, it was the first fully formed cartoon we had seen," Lazzo recalls. "It had all the key ingredients you need a cartoon to have—it had a funny premise, it had things you could do in a cartoon and couldn't do in live action. It had funny voices. And, above all, it had genius timing. Genndy has a scientist's version of creativity. A cartoon can't just be a bunch of pretty pictures. In cartoons, you literally have to count frames per second to figure out when something should happen or not happen. He has a gift for that kind of delivery—it's musical. What he really has is art and science together. You never see that."

Down the hall from Tartakovsky's office is the "Samurai Jack" conference room, where there are a few couches and chairs but no windows. On the walls are file cards that say "Chicken Jack," or "Zombies in the graveyard," or "Jack remembers his past," or "Jack is naked"—future episodes of "Samurai Jack." Tartakovsky began a recent story meeting with the show's artists by standing on the couch and reading the cards. "We don't have a lot of episodes about Jack discovering a new land," he said. "We could use some discovery episodes."

He sat down on the couch. There were about ten people in the room. During the next twenty minutes, they discussed an idea that was raised by a young man seated near Tartakovsky.

"We're looking to do the story we talked about, where Jack gets infected with a virus and it takes over his arm," the young man said. "Then it would slowly take over his whole body. Then half of him becomes evil, and he's going to fight himself."

"How do we set it up?" Tartakovsky said.

"Could he have battled Aku, and Aku has a cold, and he sneezes on him?" another artist suggested.

Tartakovsky nodded. "It's almost like we're at the end of another show with a great fight," he said. "Except this one starts with a battle. And he's fighting these robots, and Aku's commanding them. It's cold and drafty, and Aku starts sneezing, and says, 'Oy, I've got to get some chicken soup.' "

" 'Oy'?" one of the artists said.

"How do we get it out that he's infected?" another said.

"We had talked about him showing a guy his face," someone else said. "And it's half in shadow."

"He becomes Aku."

"He becomes *Jaku.*"

"The more evil he becomes, the more erratic his body is."

"Maybe somebody's getting robbed,

he saves him, and the guy thanks him, and he's walking away, and in Jack's other hand is the guy's watch."

Tartakovsky nodded.

"Do we need to find somebody to summon him?" someone said. "Is there a psychic battle with himself?"

"Or a fight in his head?" said another. "I was thinking, he knows a place to cleanse himself—a monastery. And the monks help him."

"The B story is no one's trusting Jack—they see him and they run."

"It's always stronger if Jack can help himself," Tartakovsky added. "I like the image of Jack as Aku with one eye. I like it half and half." He paused, and then he said, "The more I think about it, the body of the show is him fighting himself."

A young man who was sitting on the floor said, "He realizes he'd better get out of the city before he hurts someone, so he travels to a village."

"I still want to keep it real simple, though," Tartakovsky said.

"At the monastery, they tie him up so he can't do any harm."

"Does Aku know that Jack has what he has?"

"No, he's too sick."

"I think I would lean more toward Jack's done a big fight, and he's in the woods and he wants to get home," Tartakovsky said. "Maybe he sneezes, so we think he's got a cold. Then he goes to wash his face and looks at his hand, and it's black. We do phases of realization."

The discussion went on for several minutes more, until Tartakovsky decided that the show would begin with Jack at the bottom of a mountain that's covered with snow. At the top would be a monastery with a time portal through which Jack could travel home. He begins to climb. Aku arrives with his minions. During the fight, Aku begins to feel poorly, and he sneezes on Jack. He decides that he needs rest and chicken soup and withdraws.

Jack starts climbing again, but now he doesn't feel well, either. He stops at a pool of water, and as he bends over to splash some on his face he sees that his arm is black. Farther up the mountain, he meets a group of travellers who ask for directions and, while talking to them, he picks their pockets.

When the monks open the door of the monastery, Jack, who is wearing a hood, walks in. He removes the hood, and the monks recoil—his body has been invaded so completely by Aku that the only vestige of himself is one eye. Jack attacks the monks, and, as they fight, the Aku part of him destroys the portal. The monks subdue him, tie him up, and leave him to battle his infection. Finally, when he is healed, he stands silently before the wrecked portal, then turns and walks slowly down the mountain.

There is still a bit of the exile's anxiety in Tartakovsky. In addition to supervising new episodes of "Dexter's Laboratory," he works on six or seven episodes of "Samurai Jack" simultaneously. Some are just getting under way, and some are nearly finished. Each episode takes about six months to complete. He works perhaps seventy hours a week and is reluctant to take vacations. Last year, he took one week off, before Christmas, to go to Hawaii with his wife, Dawn, and their infant son, Jacob. "Samurai Jack" is also being made into a feature-length movie by New Line Cinema, with actors instead of animated figures, and Tartakovsky is writing the screenplay. As the most successful producer at the Cartoon Network, he probably doesn't have to work as hard as he does. Mike Lazzo says that his only concern is that Tartakovsky may take on so much work that he will "implode."

One afternoon, I stepped into Tartakovsky's office and found him staring at the wall. I asked him how the screenplay was going, and he rubbed his eyes with the palms of his hands and said that he hadn't started it yet but hoped to that evening. I asked if it was difficult to manage the screenplay along with all his other obligations, and he said, "Not really. At some point, I just had to learn to work beyond my exhaustion." He picked up a drawing from his desk and placed it inside a folder. "You have to take the opportunities when they're there," he said, "because sometimes they don't come again." ♦

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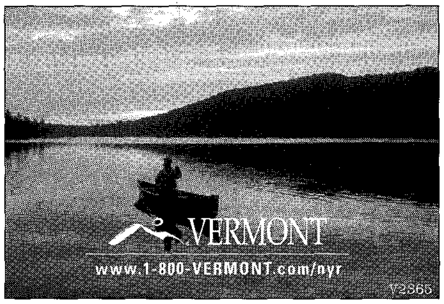

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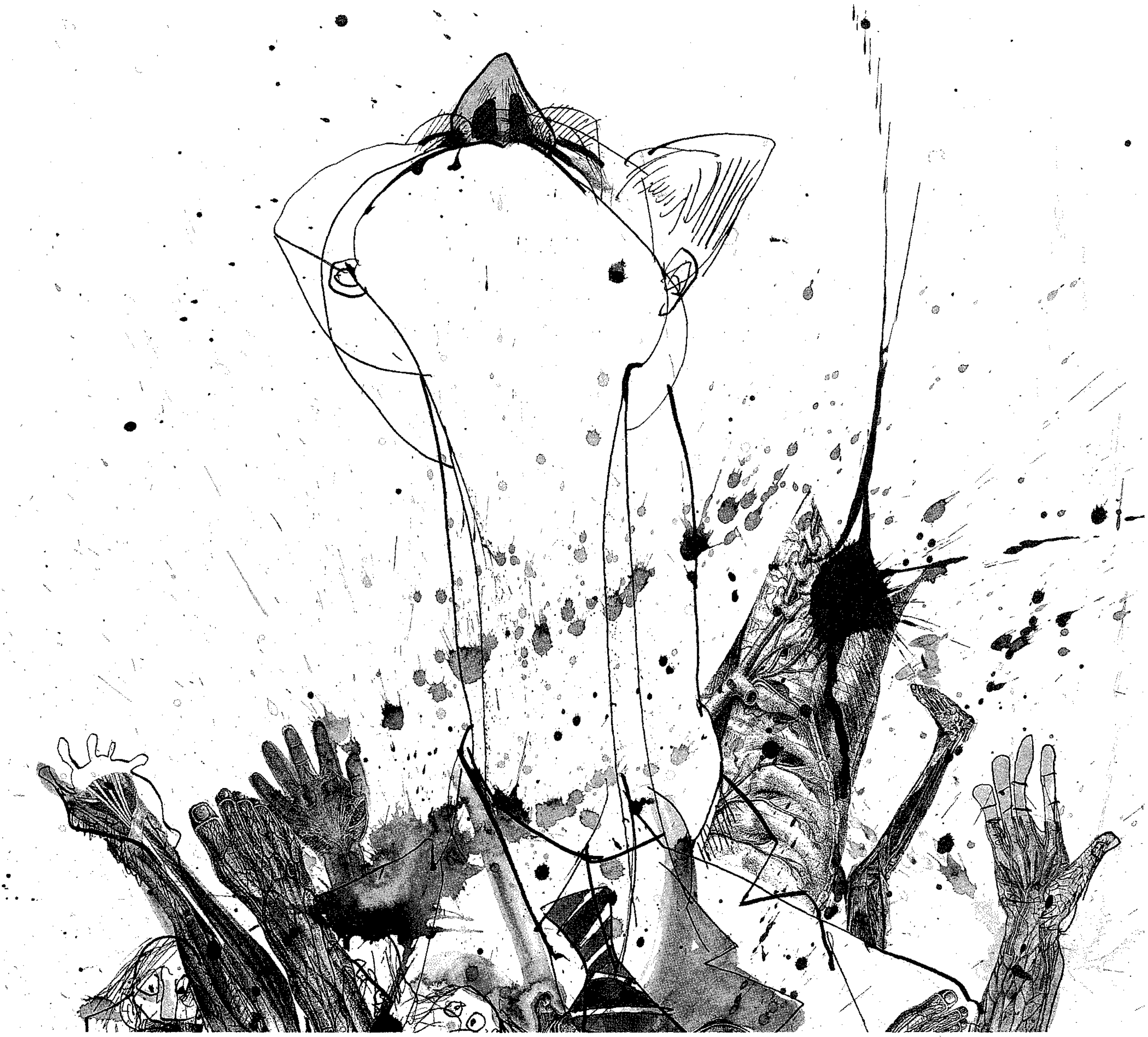
A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE DEFENDANT

Slobodan Milosevic's trial, and the debate surrounding international courts.

BY JOSEPH LELYVELD



At the zenith of his power, Milosevic seldom deigned to speak. Now, as he faces life in prison, the words pour out.

RALPH STEADMAN

The most misunderstood man in the Balkans concluded a torrential, eleven-hour opening statement in the most important war-crimes trial since Adolf Eichmann's with a flourish that was anything but contrite. Truth was on his side, Slobodan Milosevic was saying, and by his own reckoning he was already the "moral victor" in a sham trial and a sham court. "I can only be proud and I can only accuse my accusers and their bosses," he said. "They are free men, but they are not truly free. I, arrested, imprisoned, am nevertheless free. My name is Slobodan with a capital 'S,' which means 'free' in my language."

It was only the fifth day of the trial, which may drag on for as long as two years—longer than the original Nuremberg trial of Nazi war criminals (just over ten months, when it ended, in 1946) and the 1961 Eichmann trial in Jerusalem (just four months) combined. It is taking place in The Hague, at an institution formally known as the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Former Yugoslavia Since 1991.

(For short, it's the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia, or, even shorter, the Tribunal.) Every morning, Milosevic, heralded by a siren and flashing blue lights, takes a five-minute ride from prison to the court in a three-car convoy that seems almost Presidential, with the prisoner, in a dark suit, sitting by himself in the back of a black BMW sedan. He delivered his opening statement in February, over the course of two and a half days, sitting on the starboard side of a courtroom that lists to port, where the prosecution lawyers and court officers sit. Milosevic sits alone, except for one or two guards. A row of empty desks that would ordinarily be occupied by defense counsel forms a kind of barricade between a panel of three judges on a slightly raised dais and the defendant, whose seat is also raised, as befits a dock. The judges—an Englishman, a Jamaican, and a South Korean—wear black robes trimmed with strips of vermillion silk. Off to Milosevic's right are three *amici curiae*—court-appointed lawyers who are supposed to represent the defendant's legal interests but not the defendant, who does not confer with them. They sit just inside a curtain of eleven glass panels, which are said to be strong enough to withstand rocket-propelled grenades. Outside the glass is a shallow gallery for press and other onlookers, who are provided with headphones that allow them to follow the proceedings in one of four languages: English, French, Albanian, and Serbian, the language of the defendant, which used to be called Serbo-Croatian, before language and everything else in Yugoslavia splintered along ethnic lines during his reign. To those on the other side of the glass, the proceedings appear to be taking place in an aquarium.

Last June, the Serb government, which coexists with a federal Yugoslav government, handed Milosevic over to the Tribunal, and he became the first former head of state to be extradited to an international court by his own country. Milosevic has maintained at every opportunity that this was the illegal act of a NATO "puppet regime." Therefore, he insists, he is neither participating in his trial nor serving as his own lawyer. When he speaks, the court is invited to listen, but he wants it to be understood that he is really addressing the Serbian public and the wider world to protest the injustice being done to him and, through him, the Serbian people. He now attributes their repudiation of his leadership in October, 2000, to the "dirty" and "unchivalrous" and "neocolonial" machinations of an American-dominated NATO.

Milosevic's pose of not participating in the trial is belied daily in the courtroom. Proving himself to be an overbearing cross-examiner, he spoke much more in the trial's first ten weeks than anyone else, including the lead prosecutor, a polished Queen's Counsel from London named Geoffrey Nice, who was an exchange student in Belgrade when he was sixteen and returned to Yugoslavia five years later to work as a tour guide. Now fifty-six, he speaks in measured cadences in court, and only occasionally betrays an ironic smile. Nice became a walking misnomer in the accused's view the moment he started speculating about Milosevic's "mental blindness," his supposed inability to acknowledge human suffering ("layman's psychoanalytical assertions," Milosevic later scoffed). As he duels with Nice, he is implacable and impervious. He regularly ignores the standard trial lawyer's admonition against asking a question to which he doesn't know the answer and seldom flinches when an answer gets hurled back that is not to his liking. (Facing an old Communist hack from Kosovo, he asked his former comrade whether he had changed his beliefs. They changed, the man replied, when "you, Mr. Milosevic, destroyed Yugoslavia with pleasure, by war." Milosevic shrugged slightly and returned to the attack.) As long as he is holding forth, no one is likely to say of his trial what Rebecca West said of Nuremberg: that it was "boredom on a huge historic scale."

Milosevic faces sixty-six war-crime charges under three separate indictments: one each for the Croatian, Bosnian, and Kosovo conflicts. In the case of Bosnia, the indictment includes the stark and hard-to-prove charge of genocide. Even in 1991 and 1992, as his forces mobilized in the Serb portions of Croatia and Bosnia, Milosevic claimed to be a nonparticipant in those conflicts and a scapegoat. Simultaneously, he amassed power as the authoritarian ruler of Serbia and the personification of a Serbian determination never again to bury the greatest number of dead after a Balkan bloodletting. (More than half a million Serbs were killed in a vicious civil war in Yugoslavia that coincided with the Second World War.) At the zenith of his power, Milosevic was a semi-recluse, seldom deigning to speak, even to his supporters. Now, as he faced imprisonment for the rest of his life, the words poured out of him. The trial began in a stream of justification for himself and, by extension, all maligned Serbs, who, depending on where he was in his narration, had committed no atrocities; no atrocities that were inspired or authorized by him; or only those atrocities which any realistic person would expect from the latest war in a ghastly history of fratricidal conflicts in which, as he coolly remarked, "the brothers and brethren had gone a little mad."

In Serbia, during the trial's first couple of weeks, five channels carried the proceedings live, and more than half of all households were tuned in. A dock in an international courtroom was obviously not Milosevic's chosen platform, but it gave him an opportunity to show how much the issue of war crimes—and, with it, the presumption of foreign judges—continued to define Serbian politics a year after his arrest. It was as if he were weaving a web connecting the courtroom in The Hague to distant Belgrade. To make it quiver, it seemed for a time, all Milosevic had to do was raise his voice. He might be a prisoner, but he was a factor again, a politician attempting a comeback against amazing odds.

Milosevic's truculence in The Hague has served an immediate tactical purpose that goes beyond striving for vindication in Serbia. The prosecutors need insiders to come forward and confirm that Milosevic actually took charge behind the scenes and approved the brutal tactics that were used. Yet, coming on strong, as always, he could rally his supporters and intimidate former officials and military officers in Belgrade who were under pressure from the prosecutors to testify. The spectacle of Milosevic browbeating Albanian villagers from Kosovo who had come to

"What does he know, and how long will he know it?"

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The Hague to testify about seeing their villages torched and relatives shot could only give them pause. If that was how he bore down on obscure Albanians, potential witnesses from Belgrade had to be asking themselves, what would he be ready to do to them if they dared take the stand?

The Albanians testified in chilling detail, describing the methodology of what has long since come to be known as ethnic cleansing: the shelling of the village, announcing the arrival of troops and police; the flight of the village's men; the execution of some who were caught; the expulsion of women, children, and the elderly; the burning and looting of houses. The place names changed, the witnesses were more or less firm on details, but their stories came across as parts of a single narrative. Hazbi Loku, a school principal in a village called Kotlina, near the Macedonian border, started sobbing as he told of coming upon his brother's corpse after the first raid by Serb forces on the village, two weeks before the start of the 1999 NATO bombing campaign. On March 24th, the day the bombing began, Serb forces resumed their shelling of his village, and he took to the hills. From there, he testified, he could look down the slope to his village as it was being ransacked. He saw the troops round up about twenty men and march them up the slope, their hands clasped behind their heads, to a small clearing about a quarter of a mile from where he was hiding. In the clearing, he said, were two deep pits. The witness nervously worked his worry beads and choked back tears as he told what happened next. He could hear the pleas and screams of his neighbors as they were thrown into the pits, he said, and, after a while, the sound of a large explosion coming from the same place. He understood at once that they had been blown up, that there was "nothing left of them."

Slobodan Milosevic began his cross-examination with the presumption that Hazbi Loku's testimony was fabricated. Question by question, he filled in the picture of an alternate reality, drawing on material fed him daily via fax and telephone by supporters in Belgrade with access to official files. Did the witness know, he asked, that his village was a notorious transfer point for weapons smuggled from Macedonia to the insurgents of the Kosovo Liberation Army? Did he know that the terrorists had killed Albanians serving in the police? Did he know that the K.L.A. imprisoned "loyal" Albanians in the village? Hadn't it used the houses as fortified positions? Didn't the insurgents drive the residents from the village? Wasn't it true that a weapons cache was found in the pits on the hillside, and not bodies? Hazbi Loku said that he had never heard of any of this. Although Milosevic had never been to the village, he gave every appearance of speaking with as much certainty and conviction as the witness. You can call it role-playing or the art of the con, but it is a particular skill, as impressive in its way as his stamina and his intelligence. It remained to be seen whether he would put any documents in evidence or summon any witnesses to support his allegations. But for the moment that seemed a judicial technicality. Most of his encounters with witnesses in the trial's early weeks went this way: a horrendous story of villagers flushed from their homes by military and police units that were ultimately under Milosevic's command, followed by Milosevic's version of the same story, in which the fleeing villagers became tools of terrorists.

Weeks later, on May 6th, Milosevic was still framing his own version of the Kosovo war as he cross-examined Ibrahim Rugova, the territory's current President. Rugova testified to having been placed under house arrest, then hauled to Belgrade by security officials for a staged meeting before the cameras with Milosevic, who announced an "agreement" that had never been discussed. In the defendant's version, Rugova had come to him to plead for protection against the Kosovo Liberation Army. "You came to me, asking me to save you," Milosevic said. "Look me in the eyes and tell me whether that is true or not."

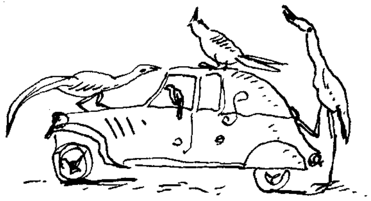
"That is simply a lie," Rugova said, looking straight at the judges.

There may never be an accurate accounting of how many Bosnians, Croats, Serbs, and Kosovars, along with members of smaller ethnic groups, were killed in the breakup of Yugoslavia. The number two hundred thousand became hallowed by journalistic repetition as early as 1993, and then, oddly, stayed fixed as the killing continued. It was almost certainly too high. Whatever it was, the loss of life was huge, once the ethnic resentments and fears that had been suppressed in Tito's Yugoslavia finally erupted in 1990, a decade after his death.

The story of Yugoslavia's demise has many chapters and hasn't really ended yet. However, the ethnic killing and the possible war crimes began in the summer of 1991, in newly independent Croatia, when units of the Yugoslav Army and police joined with secessionist Serbs who seized control of areas in which they had traditionally been a majority—about a third of the country. This first phase produced hundreds of thousands of refugees, Serbs fleeing the Croat-dominated regions and vice versa. Six months later, when independent Bosnia gained international recognition, Serb-majority areas there similarly seceded. The Yugoslav Army had prepared for the moment by transferring a large number of officers and troops to a newly constituted Bosnian Serb force that it armed and supplied for the rest of the decade. Muslims were driven from previously multi-ethnic communities in areas that the Serbs intended to hold on to, which soon amounted to more than half of Bosnia. When the Muslims refused to go along with an ethnic division of Sarajevo, Bosnia's capital, Bosnian Serb and Yugoslav troops put it under a siege that lasted for nearly four years. The next year, Croatia intervened, backing secessionist Croats in the southern part of Bosnia. A United Nations Protection Force was dispatched, but it managed to protect very little. Diplomats attempted to mediate on the basis of elaborate partition plans, but the struggle went on until Bosnia and Croatia stopped fighting each other and made common cause against the Serbs, who were then defeated in the portion of Croatia that they had claimed for themselves.

In 1995, the Serbs in Croatia were driven out, in a reversal that Milosevic tacitly accepted. Months later, an American-sponsored agreement in Dayton, Ohio, ended the fighting in Bosnia. That peace has pretty much held for more than six years now, kept by a NATO force. By 1998, however, Serb forces were again engaged, this time against Albanian Muslim insurgents in the province of Kosovo. NATO dictated terms for a settlement, but these were rejected by Milosevic. As NATO bombed targets in Kosovo and Serbia, Serb forces drove about half the province's population into neighboring countries—a crescendo of ethnic cleansing designed to change the population balance in the province forever. In the short run, this strategy was intended to divide the NATO alliance politically and tie up all the highways in the region with masses of refugees and relief convoys so that any ground attack would have to be put off. Now a NATO force patrols Kosovo.

In the course of these events, nearly a million and a half people were permanently driven from their homes. Milosevic, a Communist functionary who had managed to reinvent himself as a Serb nationalist, had much to do with the political fevers that preceded all this violence, and he remained a pivotal figure at every step. The question that hovers over his trial is whether he can be shown to be personally responsible for the acts of ethnic violence to the degree necessary to support a legal finding of guilt on war-crimes charges. In the defendant's own telling and retelling, none of it—the sieges, the burned villages, and the expulsions, recurring calamities that, finally, came to be inflicted on Serbs, too—had anything to do with any political or military strategy of his devising.



In the brief history of war-crimes trials, there has never been an accused so deeply committed to his own sense of victimization as Slobodan Milosevic. Hermann Göring, who was Hitler's Reich Marshal, was unrepentant and arrogant during a cross-examination that went on for two days in 1946. He appeared to get the better of the lead Nuremberg prosecutor, Justice Robert Jackson, of the United States Supreme Court, but, as the leading Nazi in the dock, Göring knew that he stood no chance of acquittal. In his soldierly view, the trial was war by other means, a consequence not of Nazi crimes but of Germany's defeat. Adolf Eichmann, the man who kept the trains running to the death camps, may have failed to measure up to the immensity of his crimes in his fatuous soliloquies on bureaucratic duty and in his wheedling expression of regard for his victims, but he seemed almost to welcome the chance to explain himself in Jerusalem. Milosevic presents himself as an honorable man pursued by the dominant Western media, which were instructed long ago, by clandestine services hostile to the Serbs, to cast him as a villain. By his own account, he was misunderstood, a frustrated peacemaker. "Who would organize and establish chaos in his own country?" he asked at one point, in a tone of incredulity. Expelling people from their country, he said, moments later, "would be the greatest crime imaginable, and who would do such a thing?"

The Hague Tribunal is the first truly international criminal court that the world has seen. Nuremberg was a military tribunal under the aegis of the occupying powers in Germany. The Israeli court that tried Eichmann was a national court claiming jurisdiction on the basis of a principle of "universal jurisdiction" for crimes against humanity. The Hague Tribunal is an agency of the United Nations, with a staff of nearly twelve hundred, drawn from seventy-seven nations. In the beginning, it had scant means to compile evidence or to compel the appearance of those it charged, and so its jurisdiction seemed more symbolic than real. The early indictments were notable for their vagueness, not to mention the relative insignificance of those who were indicted. The early judgments were long and, not infrequently, loosely reasoned. More recently, the Tribunal has managed to put together a respectable record: twenty-seven people have so far been convicted and five have been found not guilty. The Tribunal now has forty-three additional accused war criminals in detention. It is running six trials at once. It has set its own judicial precedents and tightened some of its procedures, and it now functions, like an established institution, in a hermetic, security-conscious world of its own. Among staff members, human-rights advocates, and some students of international law, there is hope, approaching pious faith, that the Tribunal is doing more than righting Balkan wrongs. Its real work, in this view, is to secure the foundation of an international jurisprudence on war crimes and crimes against humanity which can be brought to bear globally.

The trial of Slobodan Milosevic is the twenty-second at the Tribunal, but, thanks to the notoriety of the defendant, it is the first ever to receive much attention outside its gates. Inevitably, it has become a trial not only of Slobodan Milosevic, and his personal responsibility for a decade of Balkan violence, but also of the idea of international criminal justice—an old concept that is still relatively new in practice.

It was at The Hague in 1899 that twenty-four nations, including the United States, signed the Convention with Respect to the Laws and Customs of War on Land, the first attempt to codify international law on war crimes. The accord focussed mainly on the treatment of prisoners of war and noncombatant civilians. Exactly a century later, Slobodan Milosevic was indicted by the Hague Tribunal on charges of systematically committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in Kosovo. Such an indictment would not have been possible under the Hague Convention, which had no enforcement mechanism, no provision for a court that could conduct trials and penalize individuals.

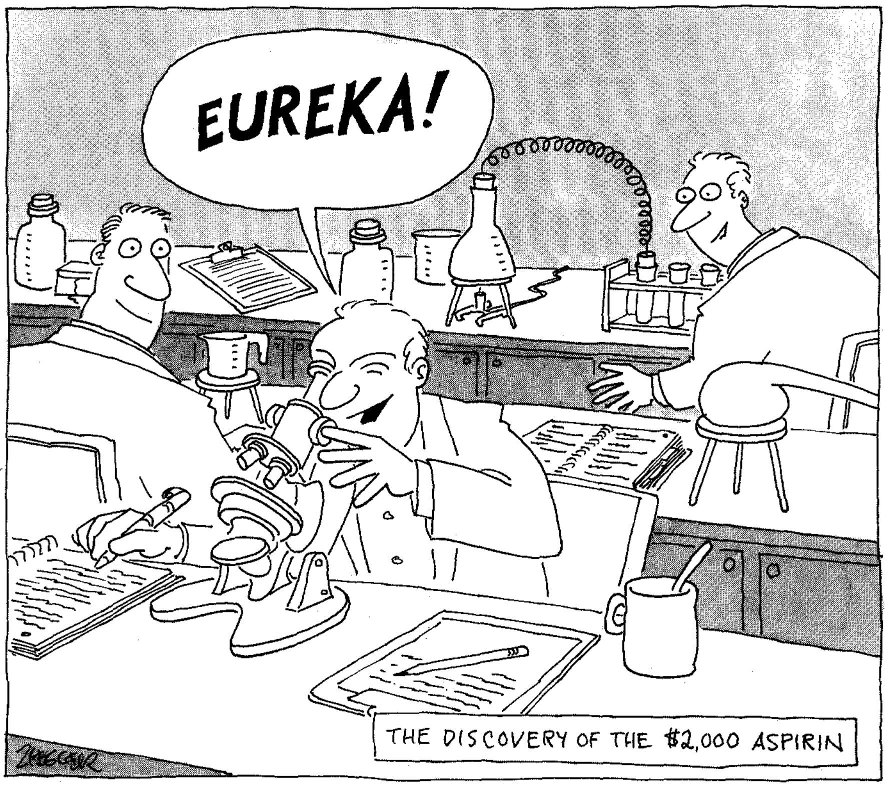
The idea of an international war-crimes tribunal was broached by Britain's Prime Minister, Lloyd George, at Versailles in 1919. He wanted to put the defeated Kaiser on trial. Woodrow Wilson and his Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, scuttled the proposal. The Americans wanted no part of international criminal courts, which, in their view, inevitably would encroach on the sovereignty of nations. Wilson and Lansing thus defined an American position that has endured to the present day: the United States seeks to promote human rights abroad but jealously guards its own sovereignty. Its resistance to the concept of international justice was softened only somewhat at Nuremberg and in the subsequent Tokyo war-crimes trials. In the negotiations leading up to Nuremberg, Justice Jackson insisted that atrocities committed by the Nazis against German Jews were not international crimes unless they were part of a plan for aggressive war. By this logic, if all the German Jews had been exterminated within the country's borders, that would have been a domestic affair. The United States, Jackson was reported to have said, was not going to set a precedent that would allow foreigners to make legal probes into its domestic affairs.

The Geneva Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, of 1948, established that crimes against humanity are of international concern and are therefore violations of international law wherever they occur. But the United States didn't ratify the convention for four decades, and then only after the furor over President Reagan's visit to a German military cemetery at Bitburg. The Senate attached reservations that sought to nullify any possibility that the convention could ever be applied to Americans.

Yet, for all its ambivalence on the subject of international justice, the United States was the prime mover behind the Hague Tribunal, at a time when NATO was desperate to limit its involvement in the Balkans. "A second Nuremberg awaits the practitioners of ethnic cleansing," Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger said in the waning days of the first Bush Administration.

The incoming Clinton Administration also tried to avoid involvement, but it embraced the idea of a tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Nearly two years later, in 1995, having resisted international intervention to halt the mass killings of Tutsis in Rwanda, the Administration backed the creation of a second tribunal on the Yugoslav model. This commotion on the frontiers of what is called international humanitarian law gave impetus to a movement for the creation of a permanent court with universal jurisdiction over

"We have lots of information technology. We just don't have any information."


EUREKA!
THE DISCOVERY OF THE $2,000 ASPIRIN

war crimes. In the spirit of Wilson and Lansing—and Senator Jesse Helms, who led congressional opposition—the United States resisted.

Under a treaty signed in Rome in 1998, the International Criminal Court was to come into being just as soon as sixty countries had ratified the treaty. On April 11th of this year, ten nations—among them such states as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, and Congo, which have had their share of wartime suffering—ratified it, putting it over the top. The total of sixty-six ratifying nations included America's closest allies, and also Yugoslavia, which seized the chance to present itself as a bigger supporter of international justice than the United States. Other holdouts include Russia, China, and the "axis of evil": Iran, Iraq, and North Korea.

The Clinton Administration voted against the treaty and thereafter remained permanently divided on the issue of what to do about the new court. It was never able to satisfy the Pentagon that a wayward or politically motivated international prosecutor would not be able to indict, say, an American pilot whose bombs had missed a target and killed civilians. Finally, President Clinton, with his term expiring, managed to have it both ways: he approved the signing of the treaty by a sub-Cabinet official but denounced it as being unworthy of ratification by the Senate. The Bush Administration was less tortured. It said from the start that it would have nothing to do with the International Criminal Court, which is due to be inaugurated on July 1st. This month, the Administration served formal notice on the United Nations that the United States considered itself to have no obligations to the new court.

It is possible to imagine a confrontation. More likely, however, the American boycott will simply make the new court weaker. It will not have the kind of financial support that the United States is giving the Hague Tribunal, nor will it have American help when it seeks to gain custody of those it indicts. And the United States will find itself with no place to go if it is ever moved to threaten some menacing ruler—a Saddam Hussein, for instance—with the prospect of international prosecution. Other nations will be unlikely to favor the creation of new, circumscribed tribunals like the one now judging Milosevic. Having created the permanent court, they will presumably want to use it, in spite of the United States boycott.

If anything, the attacks on September 11th hardened the United States' position of judicial self-sufficiency when it comes to cases that touch on the lives or actions of Americans. There was no international tribunal in existence at the time of the attacks that could have claimed jurisdiction over the Al Qaeda cases. Even if such a tribunal had existed, it surely would have been dismissed by the United States, which appears to regard the killing of Americans as much too serious a matter to be grouped with other crimes against humanity under a new international court with uncertain prospects. International justice is for broken-down states, Washington seems to assume, not for the one superpower.

America may encourage a state like Yugoslavia to coöperate with an international court, but when an act of terrorism is committed overseas against an American or an American target the United States demands extradition of the suspects, as in the case of Daniel Pearl, the *Wall Street Journal* correspondent who was murdered in Pakistan. (Pakistan did not comply.) American courts have also started to employ the doctrine of universal jurisdiction. The doctrine, which holds that crimes such as the killing of civilians, torture, rape, and terrorism may be prosecuted anywhere, was used by the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in 1995, when it allowed a civil suit to go forward in New York against the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic on behalf of Bosnians who had been violated by Serb forces. A jury then ordered Karadzic to pay the plaintiffs $4.5 billion—a purely symbolic verdict, since Karadzic, already a fugitive from the Hague Tribunal, was unlikely to submit himself to the jurisdiction of an American court.

A Belgian law went a step further, offering an absolutist interpretation of the doctrine of universal jurisdiction. It said that anyone accused of a crime against humanity anywhere in the world could be charged in Belgium's courts, regardless of whether the accused had ever been to Belgium or whether Belgians were among his victims. This is progress, in the view of some human-rights lawyers. It is also faddish, messy, and a possible argument in favor of the International Criminal Court, if only for the sake of tidiness.

In the aftermath of September 11th, the least fancy explanation of the evolving American attitude to international humanitarian law appears to be that the United States rejects the jurisdiction of any international court that might one day seek to prosecute an American on war-crimes charges or anyone else the United States would prefer to prosecute itself. But it doesn't reject the jurisdiction of a court that indicts Serbs, not to mention Croats and Bosnians (and, before long, The Hague's prosecutors promise, Kosovar Albanians). The fact that Milosevic is appearing in a court whose jurisdiction is limited to what was once Yugoslavia gives him an opportunity to claim that he is fighting for a cause in what is essentially a political show trial.

When Milosevic got to The Hague, he was put on a suicide watch in prison, on the ground that he might be depressive; both his mother and his father had killed themselves. "I would never commit suicide," he protested at a pretrial hearing, "because I must struggle here to topple this Tribunal and this farce of a trial and the masterminds behind it who are using it against people who are fighting for freedom in the world." Now Milosevic carries on about American war crimes: what the Pentagon characterizes as "collateral damage"—the hundreds of Serb and Albanian civilians who were killed in the NATO bombing campaign of 1999. And, when he does, he touches a nerve not only in Belgrade but in Washington, too. Who knows, opponents of this drift in international humanitarian law argue, when an international prosecutor might seek to act on such charges?

The most effective moments in Milosevic's opening statement came when he offered a subdued, sometimes halting narrative to accompany the display of more than a hundred photographs taken at scenes of the 1999 NATO bombing campaign; it was this campaign which finally forced him to pull his troops out of Kosovo. The pictures were horrifying—body parts, the corpses of children, a severed head in a field like a surreal cabbage, and charred remains, which the interpreter repeatedly described as "carbonized bodies." The pictures bore captions, and Milosevic read off the names of many of the victims, Albanians and Serbs, in low tones. "This is the corpse of Ljiljana Spasic," he would say. "She was seven months pregnant." Or, "Look at this field. There's nothing here. . . . They kill a village woman working in a field from an airplane. . . . This is Doljevac on the eleventh of May, 1999. The woman's name is Jagoda Mladenovic. She was killed as she was plowing her field." Now and then, he would offer a terse comment. "It's unbelievable what a burned body can look like," he said at one point.

The Queen's Counsel, Geoffrey Nice, had shown some of the prosecution's pictures of victims of Serb atrocities, but they were not nearly as numerous or as gruesome. Horror for horror, he was outdone by Milosevic, even though the total number of civilians killed in thirty-eight thousand sorties flown by NATO, in the bombing campaign over Serbia and Kosovo (about five hundred), was much smaller than the number of civilians who ended up in mass graves in Kosovo as a result of action by Serbian forces on the ground in the same period (more than four thousand). Milosevic had no use for the argument that the civilian deaths were accidents that occurred in the course of NATO attacks on legitimate military targets. Civilians, he insisted, were the targets. The prosecutors, as they gazed at monitors on their desks where the pictures appeared, one after the other, looked rapt and appalled. Even the indicted war criminal seemed to grieve over the violence of war.

The impression that Milosevic was attempting to project was undercut, however, when it became necessary for him to talk about the victims of Serb assaults on Muslim homes. Again and again, he responded with what came across as a fatalistic verbal shrug. "You are preparing to prove here," he said, "that the suffering in war is great, that people get killed during war, that people get wounded during war, that victims suffer greatly during war. Everybody knows that." If someone sets fire to a house in Britain or commits a murder, he asked, does the Prime Minister get blamed? "Only someone who doesn't know what a civil war is," he said, could imagine that political leaders could be blamed for its casualties.

A mass grave near Srebrenica. Milosevic himself

Yet, when it came to the bombing of houses, Milosevic had no difficulty placing blame on a political leader. He charged President Clinton and the United States Air Force with war crimes in the Kosovo bombing, which, in his recounting, caused hundreds of thousands of Albanians to flee—the same Albanians whose expulsion the prosecutor attributed to the orchestrated brutality of Serbian forces under Milosevic's command. Scarcely three years earlier, according to Richard Holbrooke, the United States negotiator, Milosevic had been

remarked that, in the course of the conflict, "the brothers and brethren had gone a little mad." Photograph by Gilles Peress.

MAGNUM

singing "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" with a trio of Air Force sergeants at an Air Force base in Dayton, Ohio. In his brief diplomatic honeymoon after the Dayton accord, his publicists began to talk up his prospects for a Nobel Peace Prize. Now he insisted that it was Clinton who was guilty of genocide. The Americans, he said, wanted to make sure that "there would be no victims on their side." They turned Serbia into a "target for a war without casualties." Milosevic's indignation spoke eloquently to the Serbian sense that no one in the world cared about Serb victims of the 1999 bombing. His grievance was also personal. "They tried to kill both me and my entire family!" he said, recalling a cruise-missile attack on his official residence. Finally, the defendant's bitterness derived directly from his forced exile and imprisonment, for, if it had not been for the Bush Administration, it is unlikely that he would have been extradited.

Carla Del Ponte, the former attorney general of Switzerland, is the Tribunal's chief prosecutor. In Switzerland, she was known for her zealous Mob prosecutions. Having gone after both the Italian and the Russian Mafias, she has long been accustomed to moving in the midst of a security detail, a small woman preceded by tall men, setting her own strong pace as she goes. Her gaze is direct, and so is her manner of speech. When she was new in her job at The Hague, she incautiously told the London *Observer* that her office was looking into the possibility of NATO war crimes in the Kosovo bombing campaign. "Several U.S. officials had to be peeled off the walls," a former Clinton Administration official said. Doors in Washington were shut to her for months.

Del Ponte told me she had been warned that she could not expect much support from the new Administration

SELF-IMPROVEMENT
SELF-INVOLVEMENT
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when, in March of last year, she went to Washington to call on Secretary of State Colin Powell for the first time. Her associates say that she is not given to uncertainty, that she can be almost too decisive, yet, describing her feelings before her first meeting with Powell, she could not come up with the right word in English—her fourth language, after Italian, French, and German. The word she wanted, it became clear, was "shaky." But no, she said, "Colin Powell was perfect." Powell used the lever of a congressional mandate to support the Tribunal. The legislation required that American aid be cut off if the Administration could not certify by the end of March each year that Belgrade was coöperating with The Hague. As last year's deadline expired, Milosevic was arrested, in what was seen in Belgrade as an essentially commercial transaction, designed to keep the aid dollars flowing. "We sold him," Aleksa Djilas, a writer, who is the son of the most prominent Tito-era dissident, told me in Belgrade.

Pierre-Richard Prosper, Powell's Ambassador at Large for War Crimes Issues—a position created by Clinton's Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, and retained by her successor—was on the scene in Belgrade, calling attention to this year's deadline. As the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Powell had firmly opposed "humanitarian intervention" in Bosnia. It says something about Powell's present commitment to the pursuit of indicted Balkan war criminals that Prosper is a former international prosecutor. In fact, Prosper—a thirty-eight-year-old Haitian-American who started his career prosecuting gang murders and narcotics cases in Los Angeles—won the first conviction ever handed down anywhere in the world on a genocide charge, at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. In a landmark victory at the Rwanda Tribunal, Prosper also established a new standard in international law, getting the court to recognize rape as a crime against humanity.

On his trip to Belgrade early this year, Prosper pressed the Serbian and federal Yugoslav authorities to hand over General Ratko Mladic, one of the two most notorious of the accused war criminals on Del Ponte's list of thirty-two fugitives. Mladic, a career officer in the Yugoslav Army, took command of Bosnian Serb forces in 1992 and kept it throughout the conflict. The other important fugitive was Radovan Karadzic, a former psychiatrist, who was the President of Bosnia's breakaway Serb state. The relations of Mladic and Karadzic with Milosevic and with each other shifted regularly. They started out as Milosevic's agents, then resisted him when he fell into negotiations with the West. Milosevic never bothered to hide his contempt for Karadzic, in particular, from Western diplomats. But he continued to find him useful. The Tribunal's joint indictment of the two Bosnian Serbs holds them responsible for the full range of war crimes and crimes against humanity, from ethnic persecution through genocide. This has not dimmed their standing among the staunchest Serb nationalists. At the start of the year, Mladic calendars, showing the General's chunky features, were on sale in downtown Belgrade, and in the city of Novi Sad a gathering of intellectuals celebrated the publication of a book of morbid poems written by Karadzic.

Prosper, during his trip early this year to Yugoslavia, travelled to Montenegro to pay a call on Karadzic's mother. His mission was to persuade Mrs. Karadzic to implore her son to turn himself in, so that no one would be hurt in an attempt to arrest him. Persuasion failed, and on February 28th and March 1st NATO made two raids on Bosnian villages near the Montenegro border—its first attempts in more than six years to capture Karadzic. It proved that Prosper hadn't been bluffing but also earned the derision of Del Ponte, the old Mafia hunter. When she visited Powell again this March, the prosecutor was eager to instruct the General on the elements of stealth and surprise and the advantages of plainclothesmen in unmarked cars over troops in clattering armored carriers.

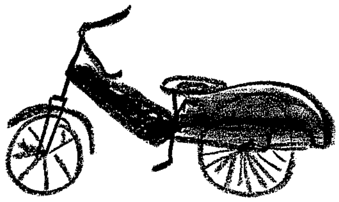
With the failed raids and the emotions that Milosevic had begun to stir in Belgrade, it seemed that prospects for Serbian coöperation on the fugitives were being extinguished. But then, on the same timetable and under the same pressure as last year—the threat of a suspension of U.S. aid—the warring parties in Belgrade finally managed to set the Hague Tribunal aside as a central issue in Serbian politics. Not only did they pass a law mandating coöperation with the Tribunal; they published a list of twenty-three fugitives who were now officially wanted in Yugoslavia as well as in the rest of the world. On April 11th, a former interior minister under Milosevic, Vlajko Stojiljkovic, shot himself in the head on the steps of the Parliament to protest the new law. His suicide had little effect, except to reduce Belgrade's list of fugitives by one. Mladic and Karadzic were on the list but were now so deeply hidden that no one was prepared to speculate on whether they were in Bosnia or Serbia, or were moving back and forth. The Bush Administration—eager to resolve unfinished business and extricate itself from the Balkans—said that it would wait to see if the authorities in Belgrade acted on the basis of their new law before restoring aid. Carla Del Ponte, whose schedule calls for the last indictments to take place in 2004 and the last trials in 2008, said that they hadn't so far.

The Milosevic trial is set up to reel backward. It started with the Kosovo indictment, involving the events of 1999. Toward the end of the year, it will work its way to the Croatia and Bosnia indictments, involving events that occurred between 1991 and 1995. Kosovo should be the least difficult of the three cases to make. Milosevic was unquestionably the commander-in-chief of Serb forces operating there: the province was and is a formal part of Serbia. But, if the extent of the carnage is the measure, Bosnia is the most important case. It is for Milosevic's support of Bosnian Serb forces there that he is being charged with genocide. And in the breakaway Serb statelet in Bosnia, as in the one in Croatia, Milosevic had no constitutional role, which makes his responsibility for what happened more ambiguous. Del Ponte insisted on including the genocide charge in the Bosnia indictment, overriding the doubts of some of her senior lawyers, who thought that it might be hard to prove. Last summer, however, she won a genocide conviction, against a Bosnian Serb general, Radislav Krstic, whose unit participated in the mass killings of between seven and eight thousand Muslim men and adolescent boys near Srebrenica in 1995, the worst slaughter by far in the recent Balkan cycle. There, as women and children were separated from their husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers, a thoroughly intimidated U.N. Protection Force, from the Netherlands, stood passively by. Few of the men and boys were ever seen again.

Srebrenica, a Muslim enclave near the border of Serbia, had been proclaimed a safe area by the U.N. Security Council in April, 1993. The Bosnians promised not to use the enclave as a base for military operations and the Serbs promised to let supply convoys through. Both sides violated the agreement. In July, a Serb military column took over the town, causing more than twenty thousand Muslims to flee. Most of them sought protection in the Dutch unit's base, in a village just north of town. General Mladic was on the scene for two days, going through showy mood swings before Serbian television crews—alternately triumphal, menacing, and avuncular. No one would be harmed, he promised. Then the systematic killing began. Two months later, Bosnian Serb forces came with bulldozers to dig up mass graves and move the remains to more remote sites, in the hope of concealing the evidence.

In judicial terms, the Krstic case established that these events met the standard for genocide, which is a narrower concept in international law than in ordinary usage. The Tribunal concluded that the killing around Srebrenica fits the definition in the 1948 convention of genocide as an act "committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group."

For prosecutors trying to make a genocide case, "intent" is the key word, more important than the actual number of victims. I asked Del Ponte whether the killings in the Vietnam hamlet of My Lai could have been termed genocide, a question I thought might occur to American generals who resist the idea of a permanent war-crimes court. My Lai was not genocide, she said emphatically. To meet the standard of intent, you would have to prove that a commander ordered the extermination of the villagers and that this was part of a larger plan to destroy a group "in whole or in part." In the Krstic case, the court defined the group as the Bosnian males of Srebrenica and found that their slaughter was undertaken to eliminate the predominantly Muslim community that had existed in the enclave. The judgment reasoned that "the Bosnian Serb forces had to be aware of the catastrophic impact that the disappearance of two or three generations of men would have on the survival of a traditionally patriarchal society." (Del Ponte is now appealing this ruling for her side, as she would not be allowed to do in a common-law system, because Krstic, who is fifty-four, was sentenced to only forty-six years. "If you're convicted of genocide," she said, "the sentence is only one—life!")



The problem with the Krstic case as a precedent for the Milosevic case is that Milosevic's name never appears in the two-hundred-and-fifty-five-page judgment, which was handed down last August. And it may not even have been uttered in the course of the trial, which stretched out over nearly a year and a half. To be successful on the genocide charge or on the lesser count of complicity in genocide, for which Srebrenica is the only named example in the indictment, Del Ponte will need documents, which are unlikely to exist, or the testimony of witnesses who may be able to link Milosevic to the killings.

Some help could come from outsiders who faced Milosevic as negotiators. General Wesley Clark, NATO's commander at the time of the Kosovo campaign, wrote in a memoir that he would be "happy to testify" that Milosevic "admitted advance knowledge of some of General Mladic's plans for Srebrenica." His account of that conversation was cut out of the book in its final editing, but when I spoke to Clark he readily related it. The occasion was his first trip to Belgrade, in 1995, with Richard Holbrooke, before the Dayton talks. He and Holbrooke were meeting with Milosevic, and at a moment when Holbrooke was out of the room, Clark said, he decided to bait his host, wondering aloud how Milosevic could represent the Republika Srpska, the Serbian portion of Bosnia, which was nominally a separate state. He recalled Milosevic saying, "Please, there are ten million Serbs here, nine hundred thousand Serbs there. They will not defy the will of the Serb people."

"If you're that influential, why did

you let General Mladic do what he did at Srebrenica?" Clark asked and, he said, Milosevic replied, "Well, I warned him not to do this, but he wouldn't listen to me." Clark sounded as if he relished the prospect of being cross-examined by Milosevic. It may yet happen. Del Ponte wants to call both Holbrooke and Clark as prosecution witnesses. The State Department resisted the idea at first, but it is now under discussion.

What Del Ponte really needs in order to bolster the genocide charge and other war-crimes charges related to Bosnia is the testimony of Serbs in a chain of command between the former President and General Mladic; and yet such a structure never formally existed, because the secessionist Republika Srpska never achieved its dream of merging with Milosevic's Serbia. Del Ponte needs these go-betweens to assert that a shadowy chain of command did, in fact, exist throughout the war.

Del Ponte dropped hints in the Bosnia and Croatia indictments about whom she was targeting as potential witnesses, listing names of co-conspirators in the "joint criminal enterprise" that Milosevic is alleged to have headed. She was plainly sending a message to these insiders that they were vulnerable, and that if they were at all interested in plea bargains the time for coöperation had come. One of the lawyers on her staff said that she may even face a decision soon on whether to offer the Tribunal's first grant of immunity to a possible war criminal. "We're getting close to that," the lawyer said.

Milosevic's style has always been to raise the stakes and assume that his opponent will fold. When he identified the Communist Party of Serbia with the nationalist urge there, it wasn't his intention to speed the breakup of Yugoslavia. (He meant, at the outset, to take over the whole country.) When he put together a motley but overwhelming force of soldiers, police, and thuggish paramilitaries to back the Serbs of Croatia and then those of Bosnia, it wasn't his intention to get bogged down in a long conflict. (He counted on the smaller states to buckle rather than fight.) When he continued to support the Serbs beyond his borders after fighting broke out, he didn't mean to bring on economic sanctions and NATO bombing. (He bet that Western threats were empty.) When he took away the autonomy of Kosovo, he didn't plan to inspire an armed insurgency or a second confrontation with NATO. (He figured that Serbia's sovereignty over the province gave him a free hand.) When he decreed a constitutional change so that he could be reinstalled with a popular mandate as President at the federal level of all that remained of Yugoslavia, he didn't intend to be voted out of office. (He was confident that his minions could fix the results.) He has the style of a bully who typically ends up feeling that he is the victim.

In the courtroom, where he is limited by rules and procedures not of his making, this style has defined his singular approach to cross-examination. Milosevic has a law degree, but his specialty was banking. He had never been a trial lawyer and had never cross-examined a witness. As the trial started, the assumption was that he would save his fire for political figures, foreign and domestic, and not prolong the testimony of villagers who came to The Hague with terrible stories of what had happened after Serbian forces moved into their hamlets. An experienced trial lawyer probably would have handled such witnesses by expressing sympathy for their losses, hoping to lower their guard, then getting them to acknowledge a few things they could not be sure of or didn't know, so as to make them seem less reliable or perhaps politically motivated. Not Milosevic. Only in the trial's third week, facing a woman whose baby had died in the mass flight to the Albanian border, did it occur to him to say that he was sorry about a witness's loss. Instead, he bore down hard, asking scores of questions meant to show that the witness had amnesia when it came to the activities of "the terrorists"—as he referred to the Kosovo Liberation Army—and amnesia about his or her own life as well, with which he was able to display an uncanny familiarity. One witness who said he had been purged from a government job discovered that Milosevic had his pension records; yet another was asked about drug-dealing cousins and a rapist in the family. By the tenth day, Geoffrey Nice, the Queen's Counsel, was on his feet complaining that the defendant was intimidating not only present witnesses but future ones. The complaint was skillfully raised, almost nonchalantly, but it hinted that Nice might be a little anxious about the course the trial was taking.

At first, the three judges gave the accused leeway. It is not a jury trial, so they knew that they could disregard arguments that struck them as irrele-

"I'm over on Third Avenue. Not much compassion here, either."

"Uh-oh—Lorraine just kicked off her shoes. That's the start of her one-woman show."

• •

vant. But soon they were expressing impatience with Milosevic's "political points," which "do not improve with repetition," in the words of Richard May, the presiding judge. Sometimes—when refereeing a verbal scuffle between Milosevic and an Albanian witness who felt doubly victimized by having to endure his relentless questions—Judge May evoked a British magistrate in the Raj who was not going to let the wrangling castes see how severely his patience was being tried.

The impact of the self-portrait that Milosevic was drawing as he spoke was harder to pin down. With every passing day, it seemed that he might be saying more about himself than he intended. Sparring with a witness who mentioned the deaths of women and children in 1998 in a military assault on a Kosovo hamlet with strong ties to the insurgents, Milosevic asked whether he knew that the police had given the holdouts two hours to come out before they made their final assault, and that some women and children escaped. "I don't know," the witness replied, "but I know that women and children were murdered in the house and around the house."

"The ones that came out of the house certainly weren't killed," Milosevic said frostily, before moving to his next question. According to a Human Rights Watch report at the time, eight children and thirteen women were among those killed in that assault; one eleven-year-old escaped.

On the subject of the Srebrenica slaughter, Milosevic showed in his opening statement how selective his memory would be. He didn't bother denying that Serbs had committed a massacre there; he merely said that he knew nothing about Srebrenica until he was told about it by a Swedish envoy of the European Union. He had then immediately phoned Karadzic, he said, who replied that he also didn't know about the attack. "Whether he did or didn't, I don't want to enter into that," Milosevic said briskly, washing his hands of Karadzic and Mladic. So much for Srebrenica. What he neglected to say was that the Swede, Carl Bildt, never talked to him about the massacre at all, only the attack on Srebrenica, which preceded it. The mass killing went on for seven days, from July 12, 1995, through July 18th. Bildt, who later wrote a memoir, says that his protest was delivered to Milosevic on July 11th. On July 14th, Bildt, still ignorant of what was happening near Srebrenica, met Milosevic and Mladic in Belgrade to demand a lifting of the siege of Sarajevo. Mladic had just come from Srebrenica. Is it possible that the General and the Serbian President never discussed the killings, then in their third day, or that Milosevic still had heard nothing from his own security and military services about events taking place just across the border in Bosnia? If he did know, did Milosevic—whose government was still paying Mladic's salary and supplying his Army—try to halt the killing? Those questions have never been answered, and it became obvious that Milosevic was not going to be the one to answer them at The Hague.

You could study Milosevic for hours as the trial proceeded, searching his expression and tone of voice for small hints of where his emotional center lay. But his face is remarkably inexpressive. Apart from his eyelids, which narrow when he seems irritated and on edge, and his left knee, which occasionally jerked up and down beneath his desk, the physical Milosevic gives away little. Only twice did I detect what seemed a degree of emotional intensity in him. The first instance occurred midway in the second week, after he was informed that the Dutch authorities had not given his wife, Mira Markovic, a visa for a scheduled visit to him in prison. The second came when he launched into a dense historical argument in order to refute a central premise of the prosecution case—that he had wanted to carve a "Greater Serbia" out of the fallen Yugoslavia. Milosevic had already been speaking for four hours when he delivered his history lecture. Instead of glancing at documents and notes on the desk in front of him, as he had been doing, he put on his reading glasses and turned to a handwritten screed that he had apparently prepared in prison. His pace quickened, and he sounded eager to persuade, like a teacher coming to the core of his lesson. Suddenly, we were back in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, decades before the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo, when holding Serbs down was a basic aim of Hapsburg statecraft. It was nineteenth-century Vienna that started the calumny that Serbs were aggressive, a lie that CNN had spread throughout the world at the end of the following century. In an instant, everything became plain. Bill Clinton and NATO were tools of the Hapsburgs, carrying out their old designs.

Journalists and diplomats who observed Milosevic over the years had concluded that he was not a sincere nationalist but a cold opportunist, a power addict with a gift for manipulating crowds and the levers of the state. Could it be that Milosevic had an idea of a Serb cause that justified everything? That suspicion recurred when he spoke about the menace to Europe of a "Greater Albania"—an innately criminal culture that condoned lying, and was aligned with Al Qaeda and the Taliban in terrorism and drug-running. The Albanian menace was just one spectre. He also claimed that if he had not supported the Serb minorities in 1991 and 1992 Croatian nationalists and Bosnian Muslims inevitably would have massacred Serbs on a scale not seen since the Second World War. "If I'm guilty for having prevented hundreds of thousands of Serbs from being slaughtered," he said, "then with the greatest pride I can take upon myself this guilt." An instant later, heedless of contradiction, he was saying that he had no authority over the Yugoslav Army and therefore had had little to do with what happened back then.

Milosevic was offering two self-portraits, two versions of history, one for the judges and one for the audience in Serbia. The court was told how he had worked "without interruption, without exception," for peace. It heard of all the decrees in his files outlawing war crimes, cracking down on paramilitaries, defending civilians. ("What else can a Supreme Command do but give orders that that is how people should be treated?" he asked. "What then can you expect from a Supreme Commander or head of state to do, more than that?") The audience at home was to understand that, despite the insistence of the prosecutors that this was a trial to determine one man's guilt or innocence, it was really an attack on a sovereign nation, that all Serbs were charged with him; that whatever had been done was done to defend them. Only one of these arguments really bolstered his legal defense, but then, as he continued to insist, he was not offering a defense before the Tribunal.

No serious politician in Belgrade has yet suggested that there could be moral reasons for coöperating with The Hague, and the last to do so may well be Vojislav Kostunica, Milosevic's successor as President of the shrunken Yugoslav state.

Kostunica, a bookish lawyer with an appealing, ruminative manner, works in a Soviet-style palace where Tito held receptions. When I called on him, he was ready with a reference to a George Orwell essay, "Revenge Is Sour," which questions the morality of war-crimes trials. Contemplating the Nuremberg trials and Germany in ruins, Orwell wrote, "Somehow the punishment of these monsters ceases to seem attractive when it becomes possible: indeed, once under lock and key, they almost cease to be monsters." If Orwell could feel that way about Germany in 1945, President Kostunica seemed to suggest, then maybe Serbia deserved less pressure and more sympathy today. I asked how he felt about the prospect of seeing the man he had ousted on trial. "It's not a pleasant feeling, I must say," Kostunica said. As President, Milosevic had been the symbol of the country, and Kostunica found it hard to believe, whatever the Tribunal said, that Serbia would not be on trial with him.

Kostunica blamed Milosevic for arrogance and failures of policy—such as not seeking a political accord with the Albanians of Kosovo—but not war crimes. He thought that there were others, more powerful, who were therefore more responsible for the breakup of Yugoslavia, others who had committed war crimes—"crimes against civilians," he said—and who were going unpunished. In each case, he meant the United States and NATO.

The issue of war crimes plainly vexed Kostunica. He thought that such crimes should be punished at home, not at The Hague, though he himself had shown no great urge to do that. What he had done instead was appoint a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, based vaguely on the South African model, but he had given it no statutory authority to compel testimony and funds sufficient only to hire a secretary. Serbian crimes were to be just one of various subjects that the commission was to research—if it ever got going at all.

Inevitably, the conversation turned to Ratko Mladic, who came in first by a wide margin in a poll last year that asked Serbs to identify their greatest defender. (Milosevic came in fourth.) I told the President that the Serbian Justice Minister, Vladan Batic, had said to me that General Mladic was being protected by the Yugoslav Army, which is under federal—and therefore Kostunica's—control in the split-level government. "The Yugoslav Army for sure is not protecting Mladic," the President snapped. I wondered whether he was all that certain. As for Srebrenica, he said that it was a "crime" to manipulate numbers. "It's a smaller crime," he said, meaning smaller than killing, "but still a crime before the truth."

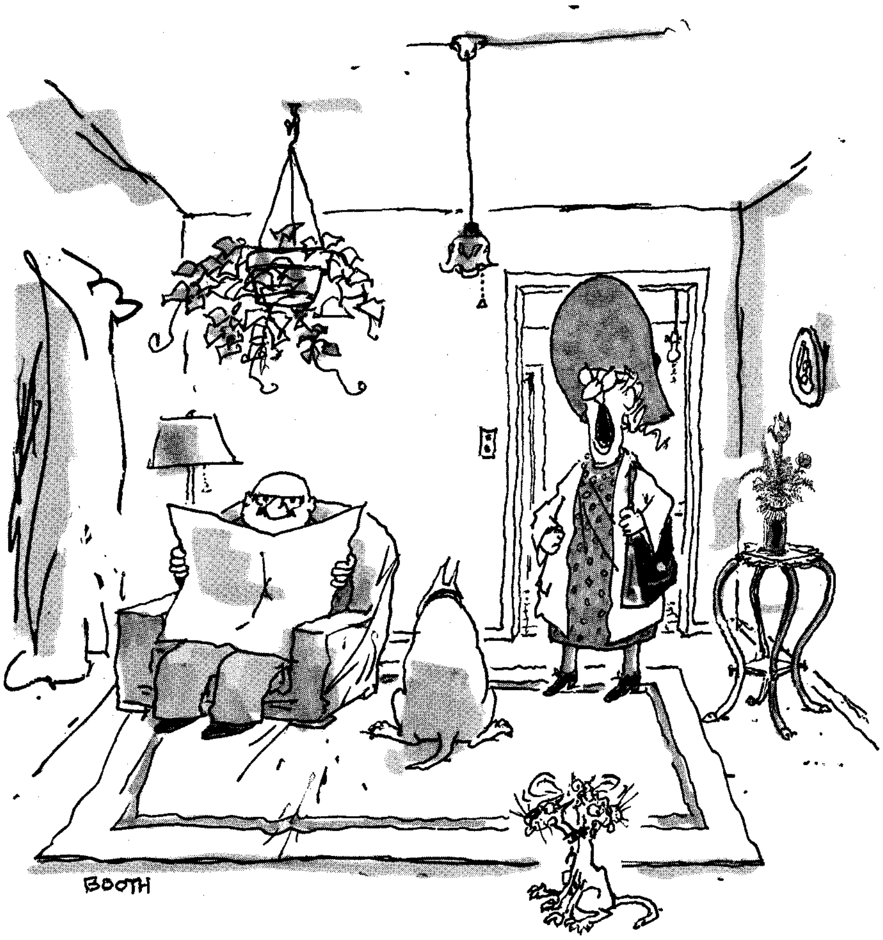
The President's chief of staff then urged me to meet the country's leading forensic expert, Dr. Zoran Stankovic. I had wanted to talk about the Tribunal, not corpses and exhumations, but, somewhat reluctantly, I went along to the appointment that was set up.

Dr. Stankovic turned out to be a reasonable professional, but this conversation also evoked Orwell, the Orwell who coined the term "double-think." The doctor wanted me to understand that although estimates of the Srebrenica toll were as high as eight thousand, only two thousand and twenty-eight bodies had actually been exhumed so far from the twenty-one grave sites that had been identified. While many of the corpses, he went on, were found with blindfolds and bound hands, showing plainly that they had been executed, this was not true of all of them. Some might have been killed in battle. The doctor was proud of the fact that the Hague Tribunal had accepted his affidavit on these points in the Krstic case, but he pointed out that the court's estimate of the death toll was still an estimate. Point one seemed to be that what was found to have been a large massacre might have been only a medium massacre. Point two had to do with provocation for the killings. The doctor said that he had examined the bodies of between six and seven hundred Serbs from the countryside around Srebrenica who had been murdered by Muslim marauders in the preceding couple of years. As he spoke, he plunked down sickening color photographs of elderly peasants with their throats slit or their faces smashed. "Srebrenica is taken as an event with no prehistory," the doctor said. "Srebrenica was not a genocide. It was a classic example of revenge." Point three seemed a little removed from the doctor's area of expertise. It was a bit of political analysis that judged the event on the basis of its consequences: the sustained bombing by NATO of Bosnian Serb positions. Obviously, the Serbs had been set up. "Somebody needed Srebrenica in order to bomb Serb positions," he said. Thus, if the Serbs had been provoked and set up, it was useless to assign individual guilt in the biggest massacre in Europe since the Second World War; if the Serbs had been provoked, then they were victims. The President's office had sent me to Dr. Stankovic; it was hard not to conclude that these were influential views.

Day after day in the Netherlands, Slobodan Milosevic repeats similar arguments. (Such things happen in civil wars: "Everybody knows that.") Perhaps months from now, when the trial gets around to considering the Bosnia charges, Serb insiders will come forward to say that Milosevic had a definite hand in them. But even then those Serbs determined not to believe might be hard to persuade. Analogies to Nazi Germany can only be misleading and overdrawn, but it's useful to remember that the Nuremberg trials failed totally in postwar Germany to kindle an interest in the subject of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The German encounter with that past started in earnest only in the sixties, a full generation later. The participants in the Balkan wars may need as much time. For now, those Serbs who feel aggrieved over all that happened in the darkest years have Milosevic to voice their indignation to outsiders who presume to judge them.

It would be a startling outcome if international justice succeeded in restoring Milosevic as an authentic Serbian voice, but it would not be startling to him. There have been only two occasions when Milosevic seemed at all deflated. When the Queen's Counsel, Geoffrey Nice, argued that Milosevic bore singular responsibility for the suffering of the Serbs, the defendant visibly drooped and stared off into space. Weeks later, he encountered that argument again, in a confrontation with Paddy Ashdown, a former member of Britain's House of Commons, who cheerfully scored debating points and soaked up the pale limelight of the Hague Tribunal as he testified about two trips he took to Kosovo in 1998. Milosevic held his own until Lord Ashdown argued that thousands of Serb lives would have been saved had the West intervened forcefully against him at the start of the Bosnian conflict. For a brief moment, Milosevic sat stunned, failing to recognize, it seemed, that Ashdown had stopped speaking and it was up to him to put another question. Jumping into the gap, Ashdown resumed, talking now about the hundreds of thousands of Serb refugees who had lost their homes and livelihoods. This time, Milosevic summoned sufficient energy to interrupt him, but without engaging the point. "Yes, please, but time is passing" was all he could say. Then, until Judge May finally cut off his cross-examination, he seemed unable to sustain a coherent line of questioning. Not only had he been staggered; he seemed to have revealed the point on which he felt vulnerable.

Milosevic has access to newspapers and television from Belgrade. He knows that Serbian opinion is not monolithic. A poll in *Politika*, a newspaper that was once a reliable mouthpiece for him, got a decidedly mixed response to questions about his performance at The Hague. Slightly more than thirty-nine per cent found the former President's defense "proud" or "superior." Slightly less than thirty-four per cent found it "unrealistic" or "impotent" or "sick." Many kept their opinions to themselves, but, on the question of whether he was getting a fair trial, more than a quarter replied, "Yes, partly." Given that the trial has many months to run, that was not, after all, such a bad start for the Tribunal. ♦



"My Chilean monkey flower is just sitting there doing nothing."

ANNALS OF CRIME

DO FINGERPRINTS LIE?

The gold standard of forensic evidence is now being challenged.

BY MICHAEL SPECTER

Late one afternoon in the spring of 1998, a police detective named Shirley McKie stood by the sea on the southern coast of Scotland and thought about ending her life. A promising young officer, the thirty-five-year-old McKie had become an outcast among her colleagues in the tiny hamlet of Strathclyde. A year earlier, she had been assigned to a murder case in which an old woman was stabbed through the right eye with a pair of sewing scissors. Within hours of the killing, a team of forensic specialists had begun working their way through the victim's house. Along with blood, hair, and fibres, the detectives found some unexpected evidence: one of the prints lifted from the room where the murder took place apparently matched the left thumb of Detective McKie.

Crime scenes are often contaminated by fingerprints belonging to police officers, and investigators quickly learn to eliminate them from the pool of suspects. But McKie said that she had never entered the house. Four experts from the Scottish Criminal Record Office—the agency that stores and identifies fingerprints for Scotland's police—insisted, however, that the print was hers. Though McKie held to her story, even her father doubted her. "I love my daughter very much," Iain McKie, who served as a police officer in Scotland for more than thirty years, told me earlier this year. "But when they said the print was Shirley's I have to admit I assumed the worst. My entire career I had heard that fingerprints never lie."

Nobody actually suspected McKie of murder, and in fact the victim's handyman, David Asbury, was charged with the crime. The sole physical evidence against him consisted of two fingerprints—one of his, lifted from an unopened Christmas gift inside the house, and one of the victim's, found on a biscuit tin in Asbury's home. The last thing prosecutors needed was for their own witness to raise questions in court about the quality of the evidence. Yet McKie did just that—repeating under oath that she had never entered the house. Asbury was convicted anyway, but Scottish prosecutors were enraged by McKie's testimony. As far as they were concerned, McKie had not only lied; she had challenged one of the evidentiary pillars of the entire legal system. Despite their victory in the murder trial, they charged McKie with perjury.

Desperate, she went to the public library and searched the Internet for somebody who might help her. Among the names she came upon was that of Allan Bayle, a senior forensic official at New Scotland Yard and perhaps the United Kingdom's foremost fingerprint expert. (It was Bayle's expertise and supporting evidence that helped convict one of the principal Libyan suspects in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, over Lockerbie, Scotland.) He agreed to review the prints, and what he saw astonished him. "It was obvious the fingerprint was not Shirley's," Bayle told me recently. "It wasn't even a close call. She was identified on the left thumb, but that's not the hand the print was from. It's the right forefinger. But how can you admit you are wrong about Shirley's print without opening yourself to doubt about the murder suspect, too?" Bayle posted a comment on Onin.com, a Web site trafficked regularly by the world's fingerprint community. "I have looked at the McKie case," he wrote. "The mark is not identical. I have shown this mark to many experts in the UK and they have come to the same conclusions."

Bayle's assertion caused a furor. He was threatened with disciplinary action, shunned by his colleagues, and, after a quarter century with the Metropolitan Police, driven from his job. But in the end McKie was acquitted, and Bayle's statement helped challenge a system that had, until then, simply been taken for granted.

For more than a century, the fingerprint has been regarded as an unassailable symbol of truth, particularly in the courtroom. When a trained expert tells a judge and jury that prints found at a crime scene match those of the accused, his testimony often decides the case. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's basic text on the subject is entitled "The Science of Fingerprints," and a science is what F.B.I. officials believe fingerprinting to be; their Web site states that "fingerprints offer an infallible means of personal identification." The Bureau maintains a database that includes the fingerprints of more than forty-three million Americans; it can be searched from precinct houses and properly equipped police cruisers across the country. Fingerprints are regularly used to resolve disputes, prevent forgery, and certify the remains of the dead; they have helped send countless people to prison. Until this year, fingerprint evidence had never successfully been challenged in any American courtroom.

Then, on January 7th, U.S. District Court Judge Louis H. Pollak—a former dean of the law schools at Yale and at the University of Pennsylvania—issued a ruling that limited the use of fingerprint evidence in a drug-related murder case now under way in Philadelphia. He decided that there were not enough data showing that methods used by fingerprint analysts would pass the tests of scientific rigor required by the Supreme Court, and noted the "alarmingly high" error rates on peri-

"Are there people in prison who shouldn't be?" a skeptic asked. "We still have no idea how well fingerprinting really works."

ILLUSTRATIONS: SAUL STEINBERG, FROM "THE PASSPORT" (1954)

odic proficiency exams. Although Judge Pollak later decided to permit F.B.I. fingerprint experts to testify in this particular case, students of forensic science felt his skepticism was justified. "We have seen forensic disciplines which focus on bite marks, hair analysis, and handwriting increasingly questioned in the courts," Robert Epstein, who had argued for the exclusion of fingerprint testimony in the case, told me. "But we have accepted fingerprinting uncritically for a hundred years."

Epstein, an assistant federal public defender in Philadelphia, was responsible for the first major court challenge to the discipline, in 1999, in U.S. v. Byron Mitchell. In that case, Epstein showed that standards for examiners vary widely, and that errors on proficiency tests—which are given irregularly and in a variety of forms—are far from rare. The critical evidence consisted of two fingerprint marks lifted from a car used in a robbery. To prepare for the trial, F.B.I. officials had sent the prints to agencies in all fifty states; roughly twenty per cent failed to identify them correctly. "After all this time, we still have no idea how well fingerprinting really works," Epstein said. "The F.B.I. calls it a science. By what definition is it a science? Where are the data? Where are the studies? We know that fingerprint examiners are not always right. But are they usually right or are they sometimes right? That, I am afraid, we *don't* know. Are there a few people in prison who shouldn't be? Are there many? Nobody has ever bothered to try and find out. Look closely at the great discipline of fingerprinting. It's not only not a science—it should not even be admitted as evidence in an American court of law."

Fingerprints have been a source of fascination for thousands of years. They were used as seals on legal contracts in ancient Babylonia, and have been found embossed on six-thousand-year-old Chinese earthenware and pressed onto walls in the tomb of Tutankhamun. Hundreds of years ago, the outline of a hand with etchings representing the ridge patterns on fingertips was scratched into slate rock beside Kejimkujik Lake, in Nova Scotia.

For most of human history, using fingerprints to establish a person's identity was unnecessary. Until the nineteenth century, people rarely left the villages in which they were born, and it was possible to live for years without setting eyes on a stranger. With the rise of the Industrial Revolution, cities throughout Europe and America filled with migrants whose names and backgrounds could not be easily verified by employers or landlords. As the sociologist Simon Cole made clear in "Suspect Identities," a recent history of fingerprinting, felons quickly learned to lie about their names, and the soaring rate of urban crime forced police to search for a more exacting way to determine and keep track of identities. The first such system was devised in 1883 by a Parisian police clerk named Alphonse Bertillon. His method, called anthropometry, relied on an elaborate set of anatomical measurements—such as head size, length of the left middle finger, face height—and features like scars and hair and eye color to distinguish one person from another. Anthropometry proved useful, but fingerprinting, which was then coming into use in Britain, held more promise. By the eighteen-sixties, Sir William J. Herschel, a British civil servant in India, had begun to keep records of fingerprints and use them to resolve common contract disputes and petty frauds.

Fingerprinting did not become indispensable, however, until 1869, when Britain stopped exiling criminals to Australia, and Parliament passed the Habitual Criminals Act. This law required judges to take past offenses into account when determining the severity of a sentence. But in order to include prior offenses in an evaluation one would need to know whether the convict had a previous record, and many criminals simply used a different alias each time they were arrested. The discovery that no two people had exactly the same pattern of ridge characteristics on their fingertips seemed to offer a solution. In 1880, Dr. Henry Faulds published the first comments, in the scientific journal *Nature*, on the use of fingerprints to solve crimes. Soon afterward, Charles Darwin's misanthropic cousin, Sir Francis Galton, an anthropologist and the founder of eugenics, designed a system of numbering the ridges on the tips of fingers—now known as Galton points—which is still in use throughout the world. (Ultimately, though, he saw fingerprints as a way to classify people by race.)

Nobody is sure exactly how Mark Twain learned about fingerprints, but his novel "Pudd'nhead Wilson," published in 1894, planted them in the American imagination. The main character in the book, a lawyer, earned the nickname Pudd'nhead in part because he spent so much time collecting "finger-marks"—which was regarded as proof of his foolishness until he astounded his fellow-citizens by using the marks to solve a murder. If you were to walk into a courtroom today and listen to the testimony of a typical forensic expert, you might hear a recitation much like Pudd'nhead Wilson's:

> Every human being carries with him from his cradle to his grave certain physical marks which do not change their character, and by which he can always be identified—and that without shade of doubt or question. These marks are his signature, his physiological autograph, so to speak, and this autograph cannot be counterfeited, nor can he disguise it or hide it away, nor can it become illegible by the wear and the mutations of time. . . . This signature is each man's very own. There is no duplicate of it among the swarming populations of the globe!

Some things have changed since Pudd'nhead Wilson, of course. A few weeks ago, I visited the headquarters of the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification Systems, the F.B.I.'s billion-dollar data center, just outside Clarksburg, West Virginia—a citadel of the American forensic community. After driving past a series of shacks and double-wides and Bob Evans restaurants, you come upon a forest with a vast, futuristic complex looming above the trees. (I.A.F.I.S. moved from more crowded quarters in the Hoover Building in 1995, thanks to the influence of the state's senior senator, Robert C. Byrd.)

Clarksburg is home to the world's largest collection of fingerprints; on an average day, forty thousand are fed into the system. The I.A.F.I.S. computers, which can process three thousand searches a second, sort through the database in a variety of ways. For example, they compare complete sets of fingerprints in the files with new arrivals—as when a suspect is held in custody and the police send his "ten-prints" to I.A.F.I.S. The computer hunts for shared characteristics, and then attempts to match the prints to a record on file. "We identify about eight thousand fugitives per month here," Billy P. Martin, the acting chief of the Identification and Investigative Services Section, told me. Martin said that eleven per cent of job applicants whose fingerprints are entered into the system—they could be day-care workers, casino staff, federal employees—turn out to have criminal records; as many as sixty per cent of the matches are repeat offenders.

The center looks like a NASA control room, with dozens of people monitoring the encrypted network of fingerprint machines sending in data from police stations throughout the country. The main computer floor is the size of two football fields and contains sixty-two purple-and-gray "jukeboxes," each filled with two hundred compact disks containing fingerprints. (There are three thousand sets on each CD.) When someone is arrested, his prints are initially searched against a state's computer files. If the search finds nothing, the information is forwarded to the federal database in Clarksburg. To make a match, the I.A.F.I.S. computer analyzes the many points on the ridges of every fingerprint it receives, starting with the thumb and working toward the pinkie; only when the data produce prints that match (or several prints that seem similar) is the original print forwarded to an analyst for comparison.

"We used to go to a file cabinet, pull out paper cards. If it was all loops—which is the most common type of print—you could spend an hour," Martin said. "Now a computer algorithm does it in seconds. The system searches the electronic image against the database and pulls up the image onto the screen. The accuracy rate on first run is 99.97 per cent." Still, this would mean that the I.A.F.I.S. computers make three hundred mistakes in every million searches. That is where trained examiners come in. The patterns on fingertips are more like topographical maps or handwriting than, say, bar codes. They can be so similar that even the most sophisticated computer program can't tell them apart; it takes a trained human eye to detect the subtle differences.

I sat with one of the examiners in a dim, nearly silent room lined with what seemed like an endless series of cubicles. At each station, someone was staring at a monitor with two huge fingerprints on it. No two people—not even identical twins—have ever been shown to share fingerprints. The friction ridges that cover the skin on your hands and feet are formed by the seventeenth week in the womb; at birth they have become so deep that nothing can alter them, not even surgery. Look at your fingertips: the patterns resemble finely detailed maps of the bypasses and exit ramps on modern roads. Experts use the nomenclature of the highway to describe them: there are spurs, bifurcations, and crossovers. Some people have fingertips that are dominated by "loops," others by "tented arches" or small circles that examiners call "lakes," or smaller ones still, called "dots." Collectively, these details are referred to as minutiae—an average human fingerprint may contain as many as a hundred and fifty minutia points. To identify fingerprints, an expert must compare these points individually, until enough of them correspond that he or she feels confident of a match.

When fingerprints are properly recorded (inked, then rolled, finger by finger, onto a flat surface, or scanned into a machine that captures and stores each finger as a digital image), identification works almost flawlessly. The trouble is that investigators in the field rarely see the pristine prints that can be quickly analyzed by a computer; most of the prints introduced at criminal trials are fragments known as "latent prints." Crime scenes are messy, and the average fingerprint taken from them represents only a fraction of a full fingertip—about twenty per cent. They are frequently distorted and hard to read, having been lifted from a grainy table or a blood-stained floor. "It is one thing to say that fingerprints are unique and quite another to suggest that a partial latent print, often covered in blood or taken from an obscure surface, is unique, identical, or easy to identify," Barry Scheck told me. In the past decade, Scheck, who directs the Innocence Project, has used DNA evidence to exonerate more than a hundred prisoners, some of them on death row. "We have always been told that fingerprint evidence is the gold standard of forensic science. If you have a print, you have your man. But it is not an objective decision. It is inexact, partial, and open to all sorts of critics."

Police use several methods to discover latent fingerprints. First, they shine a flashlight or a laser along the clean, solid surfaces on which a print may have been left by the perspiration and oil on a fingertip. When a print is discovered, detectives use a brush and powder to mark it, much as they did in the nineteenth century; the powder clings to the perspiration. (The method works best on smooth surfaces, like glass.) The print is then photographed and lifted with tape.

The technology for retrieving partial and obscure fingerprints keeps improving. On a recent episode of the television program "C.S.I.," you might have seen detectives using a technique called superglue fuming to reveal the outline of a face on a plastic bag—an unconventional use of a common practice. In order to find difficult prints on an irregular surface, such as the human body, crime-scene investigators blow fumes of superglue over it. As the fumes adhere to the surface, the ridges of any fingerprint left there turn white and come clearly into view. Another common method involves ninhydrin, which works like invisible ink: when you douse paper with it, the chemical brings out any sweat that may have been left by fingertips. Ninhydrin is particularly useful with old prints or those covered in blood.

F.B.I. fingerprint examiners have a variety of computer tools—a sort of specialized version of Photoshop—to help them compare rolled prints with those in their system. In front of me, an I.A.F.I.S. examiner stared at his computer screen as a training instructor, Charles W. Jones, Jr., explained the process. "He is looking for ridges that form dots," Jones said. "Bifurcations. Usually they look for six or seven of those." The examiners work around the clock, in three shifts, and are required to evaluate at least thirty prints an hour. They know nothing about the people attached to the fingers on their screens; the prints could be those of a rapist, a serial killer, Osama bin Laden, a woman applying for a job in the Secret Service, or a bus driver from Queens. ("Yesterday I did fifty-one for a couple hours in a row," an examiner told me proudly.)

At the bottom of the screen there are three buttons—"Ident," "Unable," and "Non-Ident"—and the examiner must click on one of them. If he identifies a finger, the print goes to a second analyst. If the two examiners independently reach the same conclusion, the fingerprint is considered to have been identified. If not, it gets forwarded to an analyst with more experience. "We have a pretty good fail-safe system," Jones said. "Computers help immensely. But in the end they can't pull the trigger. That's our job."

OATH

I will never forget you young women girls—passing—
glimpsed suddenly in a crowd on stairs in a bazaar a metro's labyrinth
from windows of vehicles
—like summer lightning—a forecast of good weather
—like a landscape embellished by the reflection in a lake
—like an apparition in a mirror
at the betrothal of what is
and what is just an intuition
—at a ball
when the orchestra dies away
and dawn puts unlit candles
in windows

I will never forget you—pure source of joy—I lived also
thanks to your deer's eyes—lips not mine
swarthy hands that caressingly selected silvery fish

Young girl from the Antilles I remember you probably the best
seen only once *chez le marchand de journaux*
I looked tongue-tied held my breath not to scare you away
and for a moment thought—that going with you
we would change the world

I will never forget you—
surprised movement of eyelids
indescribable tilt of the head
nest in the palm of the hand

in my faithful memory I repeat
unchanging mystical faces without names

and a rose

in black
hair

—*Zbigniew Herbert*

(Translated, from the Polish, by John and Bogdana Carpenter)

Only a human being can make critical decisions about identity, and yet the talent, training, and experience of examiners vary widely. "The current identification system . . . is only as genuine as the knowledge, experience, and ability of the specialist carrying out the comparison," David R. Ashbaugh, a staff sergeant with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, writes, in "Quantitative-Qualitative Friction Ridge Analysis," which is considered the Bible of the field. And although fingerprint analysis has been in use for decades, there has never been any consensus about professional standards. How many distinct characteristics are necessary to prove that a latent fingerprint comes from a specific person? The answer is different in New York, California, and London. In certain states, and in many countries, fingerprint examiners must show that prints share a set number of Galton

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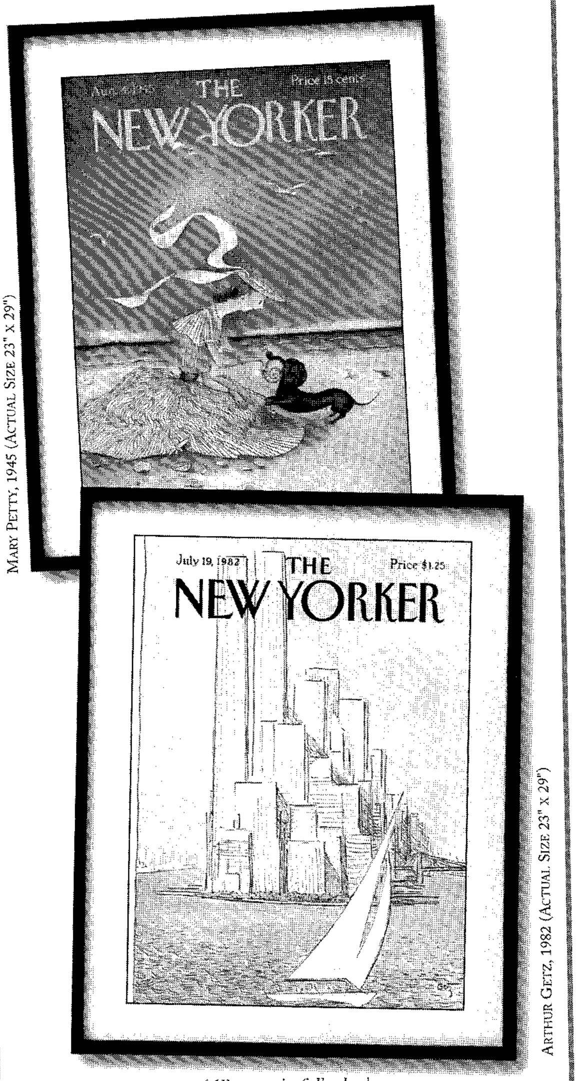
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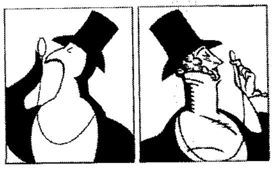

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ries," he told me. "It was
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to show that leeches did
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about how forensic sci-
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whatever might help his
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ptible to the influence of
Until recently, though,
guidelines for qualifica-
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neant that, unlike other
expert could present his
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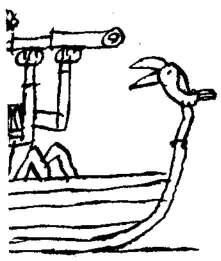
larly weak as a science.
n-eighties, the kind of
vas routinely admitted into court without any statistical grounding or rationale had earned a name: "junk science." And junk science had become ubiquitous. With the problem growing out of control, in 1993 the Supreme Court took up a lawsuit called Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals. The case involved a child who suffered from serious birth defects. His lawyers claimed that the defects were caused by Bendectin, a drug that was for many years routinely prescribed for morning sickness, which his mother took while she was pregnant. The company argued that no valid evidence existed to support the claim. The Court's decision set a new standard for scientific evidence in America: for the first time, it held that it was not permissible for expert witnesses to testify to what was "generally accepted" to be true in their field. Judges had to act as "gatekeepers," the Court said; if an expert lacked reliability he was no longer allowed in the courtroom. The ruling, and others that expanded upon it, laid down clear guidelines for the federal bench, requiring judges to consider a series of questions: Could a technique be tested or proved false? Was there a known or potential error rate? (DNA identification has provided the model, because experts have gathered enough statistical evidence to estimate the odds—which are astronomical—that one person's DNA could be traced to another.) The Court also instructed judges to consider whether a particular theory had ever been subjected to the academic rigor of peer review or publication.



The Daubert ruling forced federal judges to become more sophisticated about science, which has not been easy for them. "Daubert changed everything," Michael J. Saks, a law professor at Arizona State University, who has written widely on the subject, told me. "And it is pretty clear when you look at those criteria that fingerprinting simply doesn't satisfy any of them." Since the Daubert ruling, federal courts have judged handwriting evidence and hair identification to be unscientific. The use of polygraph data has also been curtailed. Questions have been raised about ballistics—say, whether a bullet can be traced back to a particular gun. Somehow, though, until Judge Pollak came along, challenges to fingerprinting continued to be regarded as heresy.

Relying largely on testimony presented by Robert Epstein in U.S. v. Byron Mitchell, the first post-Daubert case involving fingerprint testimony, Judge Pollak ruled in January that an expert could say whether he thought fingerprints belonged to the people accused of the crime, but he could not say that the fingerprints he had examined were, beyond doubt, those of the defendant.

Pollak is one of the federal judiciary's most respected judges. Federal prosecutors were so concerned that any ruling he issued would carry a significance even greater than its legal weight that they asked the Judge to reconsider his precedent-shattering decision. Pollak agreed.

Late in February, Pollak held a hearing on the reliability of fingerprint evidence. For three days, several of the world's most prominent experts discussed their field in his courtroom. The F.B.I.'s Stephen B. Meagher testified that no Bureau analyst had ever misidentified a person in court, and that the Bureau's annual proficiency test was among the reasons that the Judge should be confident about admitting expert testimony. Allan Bayle, the British forensic specialist, flew in from London at the request of the defense. He had a different view. He told Pollak that the F.B.I.'s proficiency test was so easy it could be passed with no more than six weeks of training. "If I gave my experts [at Scotland Yard] these tests, they would fall about laughing," he told Pollak in court. Later, in conversation with me, he expanded on those comments. "The F.B.I. are conning themselves and they are conning everybody else," he said. "They don't even use real scene-of-crime marks for the fingerprint tests." He pointed out that the fingerprints used in the exams were so different from each other that almost anybody could tell them apart. "Let's say I asked you to look at a zebra, a giraffe, an elephant, and a lion. Then I asked you to find the zebra. How hard would that be? What the Bureau should be doing is comparing five zebras and selecting among them." Bayle and other critics stopped short of calling fingerprint evidence junk science, but they noted that there are few data showing how often latent prints are properly identified.

By February 27th, the final day of the hearing, the fissures in an old and accepted discipline had become visible, and Judge Pollak promised to issue a final ruling within a couple of weeks.

A few days after Pollak's hearing ended, I flew to Cardiff to attend the annual meeting of the Fingerprint Society. It was raining in Wales, and the members of the society were deeply unsettled because their profession was under assault. Each year, the society gathers for a few days to listen to lectures and to talk about developments in the field. The society has always been a club—the type where you might expect to stumble upon Sherlock Holmes or G. K. Chesterton. The bar at the Thistle Hotel, where the conference was held, was filled with police officers from Sussex, Aberdeen, and most places in between. The conference was well attended by representatives of the United States Secret Service and the F.B.I. There were also a few stray academics interested in the latest obscure technology, such as magnetic nanoflake powders, which are able to capture fingerprints without disturbing whatever traces of DNA may be present. (With conventional methods, an investigator has to choose: either swab a mark to harvest the DNA or lift it to find the print.)

By the time I arrived, the society was preoccupied by two issues: the Pollak hearings and the lingering ill will from the McKie case, in Scotland. One of those in attendance was Meagher, the lead F.B.I. witness in Judge Pollak's courtroom. I introduced myself, and told him that I understood he couldn't discuss the Philadelphia case while it was under review, but asked if we could talk about the field in general. "No," he said, without a moment's hesitation. Iain McKie had also come to Cardiff that weekend, as had Allan Bayle. McKie, a tall, reedy man with a great nimbus of curly white hair, presented a lecture on the ethics of fingerprinting. He remained livid about the fact that a fingerprint had destroyed his daughter's career; although she had been acquitted of perjury, she felt unwelcome on the police force after having been strip-searched and jailed by her colleagues, and had resigned soon after her trial. She never returned to work. Today, she spends much of her time trying to force Scottish authorities to admit that what they did to her was wrong. "I believe a person made a mistake, and instead of admitting it they were prepared to send me to jail," Shirley McKie said after she was acquitted of perjury. "It ruined my life, and now I am trying to pick up the pieces."

The Scottish Criminal Record Office has never acknowledged the error, nor has the Fingerprint Society issued any statement about the incident. (David Asbury, the man convicted of the murder, was released in August of 2000, pending an appeal. As expected, the judge in the case questioned the validity of the fingerprint evidence that had led to his conviction.) In Cardiff, McKie told the Fingerprint Society that the system they represented was "incestuous, secretive, and arrogant. It has been opened to unprecedented analysis and it's sadly lacking. It pains me to say that, because I was a police officer for thirty years. You are indicted on the basis of a fingerprint. You are not innocent till proven guilty; if the police have a print, you are assumed to be guilty. We need to start a new culture. The view that the police and fingerprint evidence are always right, the rest of the world be damned, has to end."

Afterward, the corridors and conference rooms were buzzing; it was as if somebody had challenged the fundamentals of grammar at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association. But McKie was far from the only speaker at the conference to raise questions about the field. Christophe Champod, who works for a British organization called the Forensic Science Service, has long attempted to apply rigorous statistical methods to fingerprinting. Champod spoke in an understated and academic manner, but what he had to say was even more forceful than McKie's presentation. He told the audience that they had only themselves to blame for the state of the field, that for years they had resisted any attempts to carry out large trials, which would then permit examiners to provide some guidance to juries about the value of their analysis, as is the case with DNA. "What we are trying to do in this field is reduce,

AT THE CLUBS BY RUVEN AFANADOR *The guitarist and vocalist John Pizzarelli brings his laid-back charm and Tin Pan Alley songbook to Feinstein's at the Regency after the Memorial Day weekend. His father, the seven-string master Bucky, and his wife, the singer Jessica Molaskey, complete an outfit that John once described as "the von Trapps on Martinis."*

reduce, reduce the population so that there is only a single individual that can possess a set of fingerprints. . . . But we can never examine the fingerprints of the entire universe. So, based on your experience, you make an inference: the probability that there is another person in the universe that could have a good match for the mark is very small. In the end, it's like a leap of faith. It's a very small leap, but it is a leap nonetheless."

Half an hour had been allotted for questions, but there was only silence. Afterward, one of the organizers explained it to me: "He was using the terms of religion to describe our science. That's just not fair."

Allan Bayle invited me to visit him in London after the meeting. Bayle is six feet five with sandy hair and flecks of gray in his blue eyes. He had recently married and he lives with his wife, child, and mother-in-law just steps from the M1 motorway entrance in Hendon, on the northern edge of the city. We sat in his conservatory on a cloudy day while his five-month-old boy slept in a stroller beside us.

Bayle was frustrated. For the past five years, he had worked mostly as a lecturer on fingerprints for the Metropolitan Police. "I taught advanced forensic scene examination, and I loved it. Once I said I would give evidence in the McKie case, though, I was no longer allowed to go to meetings. But that is not why I left. They did nothing about this mistake in identity. When you know something is wrong, how can you stay silent?" He told me he was particularly upset that Shirley McKie's career as a police officer had ended for no reason. Bayle's life, too, has changed. He now works as an independent consultant. Although he has been portrayed as a critic of fingerprint analysis, he is critical only of the notion that it should never be questioned. "It's a valuable craft," he said. "But is it a science like physics or biology? Well, of course not. All I have been saying is, let's admit we make errors and do what we can to limit them. It is such a subjective job. The F.B.I. want to say they are not subjective. Well, look at what David Ashbaugh—certainly among the most noted of all fingerprint analysts—said when he testified in the Mitchell case." Ashbaugh had clearly stated that fingerprint identification was "subjective," adding that the examiner's talents are his "personal knowledge, ability, and experience."

Bayle took out a large portfolio containing dozens of fingerprints, as well as gruesome pictures of crime scenes. "Look at the mess," he said. He showed me a series of photographs: jagged fingerprints—black smudges, really—recovered from the scenes of several murders he had investigated. "With all that information, you then come to your conclusions. You have to somehow match that to this clean image"—he handed me a picture of a perfect print, taken at a police booking—"and say, finally, it's one man's print. You have got to look at everything, not just points. The Bureau has not had a missed ident in all their years of working, and I applaud that. But they are not testing their experts' ability. And that is dangerous."

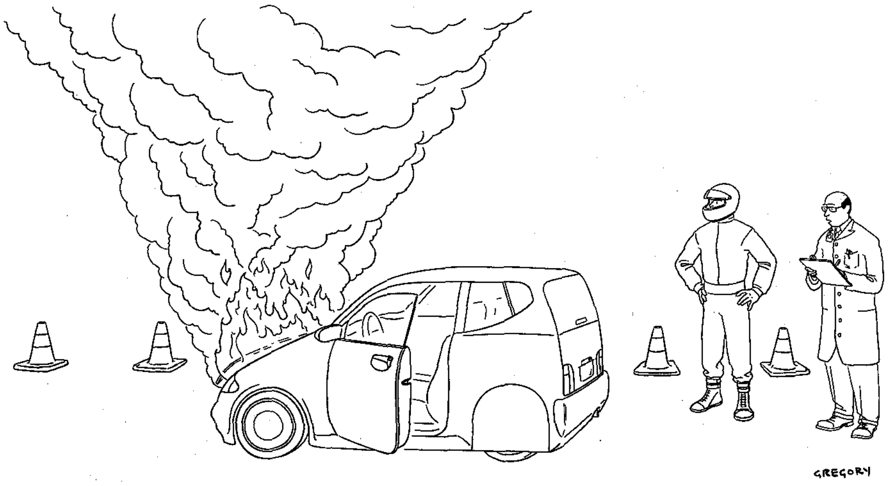
"Trying to live more in the moment was your idea."

The following week, Stephen Meagher agreed to speak with me at the F.B.I. headquarters, on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington. Meagher is perhaps the best known and most forceful advocate for the view that fingerprint evidence is scientifically valid and that it ought to be welcome in courts.

"But is it really a science?" I asked as soon as we settled down to talk in his office. Meagher said that he didn't think of science as a term that could be easily defined or tailored to fit all disciplines in the same way. "There is academic science, legal science, and forensic science," he told me. "They are different. You can be an expert in the field and give testimony without having an academic level of scientific knowledge. . . . It is not achievable to take pure science and move it into a legal arena." This seemed surprising, since Meagher had often argued that, when performed correctly, fingerprint analysis is an "objective" science. In 1999, when he was asked in court whether, based on the unique properties of fingerprints, he had an opinion of the error rate associated with his work, he said, "As applied to the scientific methodology, it's zero." (Scientists don't talk this way; it is an axiom among biomedical researchers that nothing in biology is true a hundred per cent of the time.)

Later, when I asked David Faigman, the Hastings law professor, whether it made sense to divide science into legal, academic, and forensic subgroups, he laughed.

"Of course it makes no sense," he said. "Mr. Meagher operates on a sixteenth-century notion—a Francis Bacon idea—of what science is all about. To me, the analogue for law is meteorology. It deals with physics and chemistry—the most



"I wouldn't worry about it—this is marketing's headache."

basic sciences. Yet it has to make predictions and empirical statements regarding complex reality. That is because so many factors determine the weather that it's really a probabilistic science. And I think fingerprinting is the same."

"Most fields of normal science could pull from the shelf dozens or hundreds, if not thousands, of studies testing their various hypotheses and contentions, which had been conducted over the past decades or century, and hand them to the court," Michael Saks wrote in "Modern Scientific Evidence." For fingerprinting there was nothing. In 1999, the F.B.I. conducted its study in preparation for the Byron Mitchell trial. The study asked examiners to match the two actual latent prints taken from the car in the Mitchell case with the known set of fingerprints of the man on trial. Both sets of prints were sent to the crime laboratories of fifty-three law-enforcement agencies. Of the thirty-five agencies that examined them and responded, most concluded that the latent prints matched the known prints of the accused; eight said that no match could be made for one of the latent prints, and six said that no match could be made for the other print. The F.B.I., realizing it had a problem, sent annotated enlargements of all the prints to those examiners who had said the fingerprints couldn't be matched. In these photographs, the points of similarity on the fingertips were clearly marked. This time, every lab adopted the F.B.I.'s conclusions.

When I asked Meagher about the study, he told me that the test was supposed to demonstrate the uniqueness of the prints; it was not meant to be a test of competency. He claimed opponents have used the data unfairly. At the same time, he conceded that it would not matter how clean a fingerprint was if the person examining it hadn't been trained properly. "Our system is a huge statistical-probability model, but it doesn't make identifications, because it doesn't have all the information that is needed," he said. "It's a job for human beings."

On March 13th, Judge Pollak vacated his earlier order. He issued a new opinion, in which he stated that the defense had succeeded in raising "real questions about the adequacy of the proficiency tests taken annually by certified F.B.I. fingerprint examiners." Yet he was persuaded by the F.B.I.'s record of accuracy, and wrote that "whatever may be the case for other law-enforcement agencies" the Bureau's standards seemed good enough to permit F.B.I. experts to testify in his courtroom. "In short," he concluded, "I have changed my mind." It was, naturally, a blow to the opposition—though Pollak was careful to rule only on the case before him and only with regard to the F.B.I.

I met with the Judge shortly after he issued his decision. Having arrived early for our meeting, I watched as he led the jury-selection process in the case in which Meagher will now be permitted to testify. Like most courtrooms, it was decorated with an American flag, but it was filled with art as well: prints by Matisse, Cézanne, and Eakins and drawings by Victor Hugo lined the walls.

During the lunch break, we sat in his ramshackle office. The stuffing was falling out of both of our chairs. Pollak, a lively man in his late seventies, declined to talk specifically about the case, but was happy to consider the broader issues it raised. "The most important question here, of course, is, Am I the right person to be a gatekeeper?" he said. "I, who know little of science. . . . As society comes to rely more fully on technology, the question will become acute." Pollak said that he found it worrisome that the Supreme Court ruling in the Daubert case meant that he could rule one way on an issue like fingerprints and another federal judge in a different jurisdiction could do the opposite, and neither ruling would be reversed (the Court will hear appeals only on procedure, not on the law). He was frank about how poorly prepared most judges are for making decisions based on scientific issues.

"I want to tell you that shortly after I got into this line of work there was no more unqualified district judge"—for making such decisions—"in the United States," Judge Pollak said of himself. He told me that in the early nineteen-eighties he had met a former chief executive of DuPont at a reception. "He asked me how it can be that people like me are entrusted to make such major scientific decisions. He wasn't questioning my good faith. But by virtue of my job I have been asked to make decisions that are out of the range of any competence that I have." Pollak conceded that the DuPont chairman had a point. I asked if he felt scientifically competent to rule on the current case in Philadelphia. He laughed but didn't answer. "I knew when I decided the thing there was going to be some surprise," he said, referring to his initial opinion. "Honestly, I don't think I had anticipated the degree to which people would be startled. . . . Other lawyers in fingerprint situations are now almost duty bound to raise these questions and challenges again. How could they in good faith act in any other way? This decision is certainly not the end. I think we can be certain of that." ♦

FICTION

THE TROUBLE WITH MRS. BLYNN, THE TROUBLE WITH THE WORLD

BY PATRICIA HIGHSMITH

MALCOLM DUNBAR/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

Mrs. Palmer was dying, there was no doubt of that to her or to anyone else in the household. The household had grown from two, Mrs. Palmer and Elsie the housemaid, to four in the past ten days. Elsie's daughter Liza, age fourteen, had come to help her mother, and had brought their shaggy sheepdog Princy—who to Mrs. Palmer made a fourth presence in the house. Liza spent most of her time doing things in the kitchen, and slept in the little low-ceilinged room with double-deck bunks down the steps from Mrs. Palmer's room. The cottage was small—a sitting room and dining alcove and kitchen downstairs, and upstairs Mrs. Palmer's bedroom, the room with the two bunks, and a tiny back room where Elsie slept. All the ceilings were low and the doorways and the ceiling above the stairway even lower, so that one had to duck one's head constantly.

Mrs. Palmer reflected that she would have to duck her head very few times more, as she rose only a couple of times a day, making her way, her lavender dressing gown clutched about her against the chill, to the bathroom. She had leukemia. She was not in any pain, but she was terribly weak. She was sixty-one. Her son Gregory, an officer in the R.A.F., was stationed in the Middle East, and perhaps would come in time and perhaps wouldn't. Mrs. Palmer had purposely not made her telegram urgent, not wanting to upset or inconvenience him, and his telegraphed reply had simply said that he would do his best to get leave to fly to her, and would let her know when. A cowardly telegram hers had been, Mrs. Palmer thought. Why hadn't she had the courage to say outright, "Am going to die in about a week. Can you come to see me?"

"Missus Palmer?" Elsie stuck her head in the door, one floury hand resting against the doorjamb. "Did Missus Blynn say four-thirty or five-thirty today?"

Mrs. Palmer did not know, and it did not seem in the least important. "I think five-thirty."

Elsie gave a preoccupied nod, her mind on what she would serve for five-thirty tea as opposed to four-thirty tea. The five-thirty tea could be less substantial, as Mrs. Blynn would already have had tea somewhere.

"Anything I can get you, Missus

Palmer?" she asked in a sweet voice, with a genuine concern.

"No, thank you, Elsie, I'm quite comfortable." Mrs. Palmer sighed as Elsie closed the door again. Elsie was willing, but unintelligent. Mrs. Palmer could not *talk* to her, not that she would have wanted to talk intimately to her, but it would have been nice to have the feeling that she could talk to someone in the house if she wished to.

Mrs. Palmer had no close friends in the town, because she had been here only a month. She had been en route to Scotland when the weakness came on her again and she had collapsed on a train platform in Ipswich. A long journey to Scotland by train or even airplane had been out of the question, so on a strange doctor's recommendation Mrs. Palmer had hired a taxi and driven to a town on the east coast called Eamington, where the doctor knew there was a visiting nurse, and where the air was splendid and bracing. The doctor had evidently thought she needed only a few weeks' rest and she would be on her feet again, but Mrs. Palmer had had a premonition that this wasn't true. She had felt better the first few days in the quiet little town, she had found the cottage called Sea Maiden and rented it at once, but the spurt of energy had been brief. In Sea Maiden she had collapsed again, and Mrs. Palmer had the feeling that Elsie and even a few other acquaintances she had made, like Mr. Frowley the real-estate agent, resented her *faiblesse*. She was not only a stranger come to trouble them, to make demands on them, but her relapse belied the salubrious powers of Eamington air—just now mostly gale-force winds which swept from the northeast day and night, tearing the buttons from one's coat, plastering a sticky, opaque film of salt and spray on the windows of all the houses on the seafront. Mrs. Palmer was sorry to be a burden herself, but at least she could pay for it, she thought. She had rented a rather shabby cottage that would otherwise have stayed empty all winter, since it was early February now, she was employing Elsie at slightly better than average Eamington wages, she paid Mrs. Blynn a guinea per half-hour visit (and most of that half hour was taken up with her tea), and she soon would bring business to the undertaker, the sexton, and perhaps the shopkeeper who sold flowers. She had also paid her rent through March.

Hearing a quick tread on the pavement, in a lull in the wind's roar, Mrs. Palmer sat up a little in bed. Mrs. Blynn was arriving. An anxious frown touched Mrs. Palmer's thin-skinned forehead, but she smiled faintly, too, with beforehand politeness. She reached for the long-handled mirror that lay on her bed table. Her gray face had ceased to shock her or to make her feel shame. Age was age, death was death, and not pretty, but she still had the impulse to do what she could to look nicer for the world. She tucked some hair back into place, moistened her lips, tried a little smile, pulled a shoulder of her nightdress even with the other and her pink cardigan closer about her. Her pallor made the blue of her eyes much bluer. That was a pleasant thought.

Elsie knocked and opened the door at the same time. "Missus Blynn, Ma'am."

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Palmer," Mrs. Blynn said, coming down the two steps from the threshold into Mrs. Palmer's room. She was a full-bodied, dark-blond woman of middle height, about forty-five, and she wore her usual bulky two-piece black suit with a rose-colored floral pin on her left breast. She also wore pale-pink lipstick and rather high heels. Like many women in Eamington, she was a sea widow, and had taken up nursing after she was forty. She was highly thought of in the town as an energetic woman who did useful work. "And how are you this afternoon?"

"Good afternoon. Well as can be expected, I think you'd say," Mrs. Palmer said with an effort at cheerfulness. Already she was loosening the covers, preparatory to pushing them back entirely for her daily injection.

But Mrs. Blynn was standing with an absent smile in the center of the room, hands folded backward on her hips, surveying the walls, gazing out the window. Mrs. Blynn had once lived in this house with her husband, for six months when they were first married, and every day Mrs. Blynn said something about it. Mrs. Blynn's husband had been the captain of a merchant ship, and had gone down with it ten years ago in a collision with a Swedish ship only fifty nautical miles from Eamington. Mrs. Blynn had never married again. Elsie said that her house was filled with photographs of the captain in uniform and of his ship.

"Yes-s, it's a wonderful little house," Mrs. Blynn said, "even if the wind does come in a bit." She looked at Mrs. Palmer with brighter eyes, as if she were about to say, "Well, now, a few more of these injections and you'll be as fit as can be, won't you?"

But in the next seconds Mrs. Blynn's expression changed. She groped in her black bag for the needle and the bottle of clear fluid that would do no good. Her mouth lost its smile and drooped, and deeper lines came at its corners. By the time she plunged the needle into Mrs. Palmer's fleshless body, her bulging green-gray eyes were glassy, as if she saw nothing and did not need to see anything: this was her business, and she knew how to do it. Mrs. Palmer was an object, which paid a guinea a visit. The object was going to die. Mrs. Blynn became apathetic, as if even the cutting off of the guinea in three days or eight days mattered nothing to her, either.

Guineas as such mattered nothing to Mrs. Palmer, but in view of the fact that she was soon quitting this world she wished Mrs. Blynn could show something so human as a desire to prolong the guineas. Mrs. Blynn's eyes remained glassy, even when she glanced at the door to see if Elsie was coming in with her tea. Occasionally the floorboards in the hall cracked from the heat or the lack of it, and so they did when someone walked just outside the door.

The injection hurt today, but Mrs. Palmer did not flinch. It was really such a small thing; she smiled at the slightness of it. "A little sunshine today, wasn't there?" Mrs. Palmer said.

"Was there?" Mrs. Blynn jerked the needle out.

"Around eleven this morning. I noticed it." Weakly she gestured toward the window behind her.

"We can certainly use it," Mrs. Blynn said, putting her equipment back in her bag. "Goodness, we can use that fire, too." She had fastened her bag, and now she chafed her palms, huddling toward the grate.

Princy was stretched full length before the fire, looking like a rolled-up shag rug.

Mrs. Palmer tried to think of some-

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thing pleasant to say about Mrs. Blynn's husband, their time in this house, the town, anything. She could only think of how lonely Mrs. Blynn's life must be since her husband died. They had had no children. According to Elsie, Mrs. Blynn had worshipped her husband, and took pride in never having remarried. "Have you many patients this time of year?" Mrs. Palmer asked.

"Oh, yes. Like always," Mrs. Blynn said, still facing the fire and rubbing her hands.

Who? Mrs. Palmer wondered. *Tell me about them.* She waited, breathing softly.

Elsie knocked once, by bumping a corner of the tray against the door.

"Come in, Elsie," they both said, Mrs. Blynn a bit louder.

"Here we are," Elsie said, setting the tray down on a hassock made by two massive olive-green pillows, one atop the other. Butter slid down the side of a scone, spread onto the plate, and began to congeal while Elsie poured the tea.

Elsie handed Mrs. Palmer a cup of tea with three lumps of sugar, but no scone, because Mrs. Blynn said they were too indigestible for her. Mrs. Palmer did not mind. She appreciated the sight of well-buttered scones, anyway, and of healthy people like Mrs. Blynn eating them. She was offered a ginger biscuit and declined it. Mrs. Blynn talked briefly to Elsie about her water pipes, about the reduced price of something at the butcher's this week, while Elsie stood with folded arms, leaning against the edge of the door, letting in a frigid draft on Mrs. Palmer. Elsie was taking in all Mrs. Blynn's information about prices. Now it was ketchup at the health store. On sale this week.

"Call me if you'd like something," Elsie said, as usual, ducking out the door.

Mrs. Blynn was sunk in her scones, leaning over so the dripping butter would fall on the stone floor and not on her skirt.

Mrs. Palmer shivered, and drew the covers up.

"Is your son coming?" Mrs. Blynn asked in a loud, clear voice, looking straight at Mrs. Palmer.

Mrs. Palmer did not know what Elsie had told Mrs. Blynn. She had told Elsie that he might come, that was all. "I haven't heard yet. He's probably waiting to tell me the exact time he'll come—or to find out if he can or not. You know how it is in the Air Force."

"Um-m," Mrs. Blynn said through a scone, as if of course she knew, having had a husband who had been in service. "He's your only son and heir, I take it."

"My only one," Mrs. Palmer said.

"Married?"

"Yes." Then, anticipating the next question, "He has one child, a daughter, but she's still very small."

Mrs. Blynn's eyes kept drifting to Mrs. Palmer's bed table, and suddenly Mrs. Palmer realized what she was looking at—her amethyst pin. Mrs. Palmer had worn it for a few days on her cardigan sweater, until she had felt so bad that the pin ceased to lift her spirits and became almost tawdry, and she had removed it.

"That's a beautiful pin," Mrs. Blynn said.

"Yes. My husband gave it to me years ago."

Mrs. Blynn came over to look at it, but she did not touch it. The rectangular amethyst was set in small diamonds. She stood up, looking down at it with alert, bulging eyes. "I suppose you'll pass it on to your son—or his wife."

Mrs. Palmer flushed with embarrassment, or anger. She hadn't thought to whom she would pass it on, particularly. "I suppose my son will get everything, as my heir."

"I hope his wife appreciates it," Mrs. Blynn said, turning on her heel with a smile, setting her cup down in its saucer.

Then Mrs. Palmer realized that for the last few days it was the pin that Mrs. Blynn had been looking at when her eyes drifted over to the bed table. When Mrs. Blynn had gone, Mrs. Palmer picked up the pin and held it in her palm protectively. Her jewel box was across the room. Elsie came in, and Mrs. Palmer said, "Elsie, would you mind handing me that blue box over there?"

"Certainly, Ma'am," Elsie said, swerving from the tea tray to the box on the

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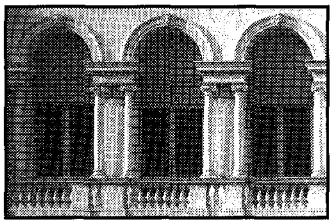

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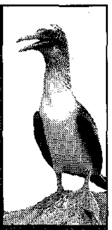

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top of the bookshelf. "This the one?"

"Yes, thank you." Mrs. Palmer took it, opened the lid, and dropped the pin on her pearls. She had not much jewelry, perhaps ten or eleven pieces, but each piece meant a special occasion in her life, or a special period, and she loved them all. She looked at Elsie's blunt, homely profile as she bent over the tray, arranging everything so that it could be carried out at once.

"That Mrs. Blynn," Elsie said, shaking her head, not looking at Mrs. Palmer. "Asked me if I thought your son was coming. How was I to know? I said yes, *I* thought so." Now she stood with the tray, looking at Mrs. Palmer, and she smiled awkwardly, as if she had said perhaps too much. "The trouble with Mrs. Blynn is she's always nosing—if you'll pardon me saying so. Asking questions, you know?"

Mrs. Palmer nodded, feeling too low just at that moment to make a comment. She had no comment, anyway. Elsie, she thought, had passed back and forth by the amethyst pin for days and never mentioned it, never touched it, maybe never even noticed it. Mrs. Palmer suddenly realized how much more she liked Elsie than she liked Mrs. Blynn.

"The trouble with Mrs. Blynn—she means well, but . . ." Elsie floundered and jiggled the tray in her effort to shrug. "It's too bad. Everyone's always saying it about her," she finished, as if this summed it up, and started out the door. But she turned with the door open. "At tea, for instance. It's always get this and get that for her, as if she were a grand lady or something. A day ahead she tells me. I don't see why she don't bring what she wants from the bakery now and then herself. If you know what I mean."

Mrs. Palmer nodded. She supposed she knew. She knew. Mrs. Blynn was like a nursemaid she had had for a time for Gregory. Like a divorcée she and her husband had known in London. She was like a lot of people.

Mrs. Palmer died two days later. It was a day when Mrs. Blynn came in and out, perhaps six times, perhaps eight. A telegram had arrived that morning from Gregory, saying that he had at last wangled leave and would take off in a matter of hours, landing at a military field near Eamington. Mrs. Palmer did not know if she would see him again or not; she could not judge her strength that far. Mrs. Blynn took her temperature and felt her pulse frequently, then pivoted on one foot in the room, looking about as if she were alone and thinking her own thoughts. Her expression was blankly pleasant, her peaches-and-cream cheeks aglow with health.

"Your son's due today," Mrs. Blynn half said, half asked, on one of her visits.

"Yes," Mrs. Palmer said.

It was then dusk, though it was only four in the afternoon.

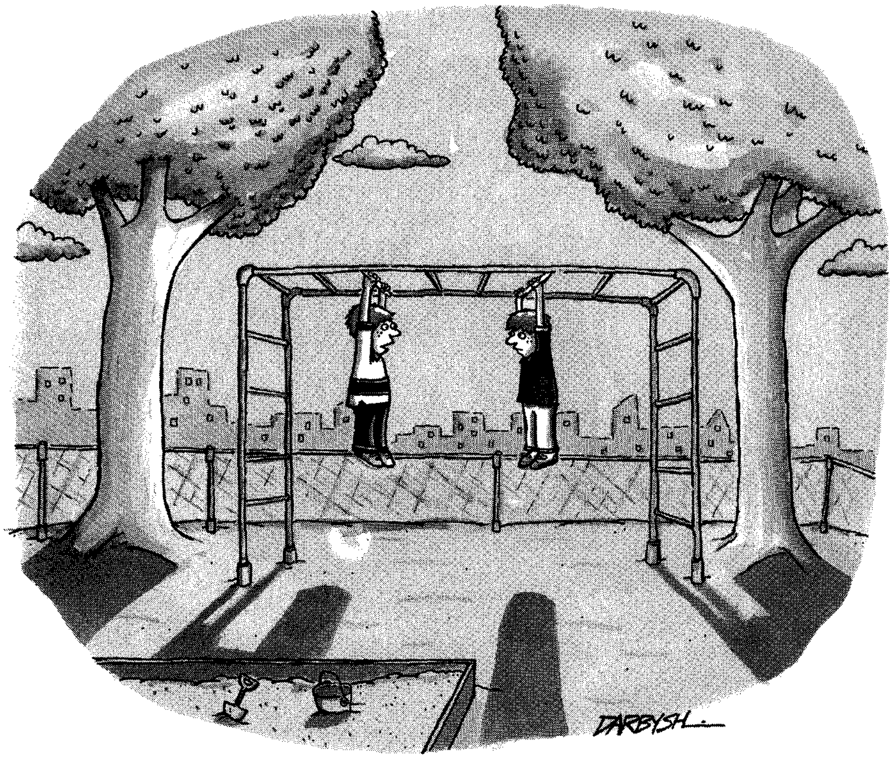
That was the last clear exchange she had with anyone, for she sank into a kind of dream. She saw Mrs. Blynn staring at the blue box on the top of the bookshelf, staring at it even as she shook the thermometer down. Mrs. Palmer called for Elsie and had her bring the box to her. Mrs. Blynn was not in the room then.

"This is to go to my son when he comes," Mrs. Palmer said. "All of it. Everything. You understand? It's all written . . ." But, even though it was all itemized, a single piece like the amethyst pin might be missing and Gregory would never do anything about it, maybe not even notice, maybe think she'd lost it somewhere in the last weeks and not reported it. Gregory was like that. Then Mrs. Palmer smiled at herself, and also reproached herself. *You can't take it with you.* That was very true, and people who tried to were despicable and rather absurd. "Elsie, this is yours," Mrs. Palmer said, and handed Elsie the amethyst pin.

"Oh, Mrs. Palmer! Oh, no, I couldn't take *that!*" Elsie said, not taking it, and in fact retreating a step.

"You've been very good to me," Mrs. Palmer said. She was very tired, and her arm dropped to the bed. "Very well," she murmured, seeing that it was really no use.

Her son came at six that evening, sat with her on the edge of her bed, held her hand and kissed her forehead. But when she died Mrs. Blynn was closest, bending over her with her great round peaches-and-cream face and her green-gray eyes as expressionless as some fantastic reptile's. Mrs. Blynn, to the last, continued to say crisp, efficient things to her, like "Breathe easily. That's it," and "Not chilly, are you? Good." Somebody had mentioned a priest ear-



"I like you, Henry—you're one of the few people around here who actually get it."

• •

lier, but this had been overruled by both Gregory and Mrs. Palmer. So it was Mrs. Blynn's eyes that she looked into as her life left her. Mrs. Blynn so authoritative, strong, efficient, one might have taken her for God himself. Especially since when Mrs. Palmer looked toward her son she couldn't really see him, only a vague pale-blue figure in the corner, tall and erect, with a dark spot at the top that was his hair. He was looking at her, but now she was too weak to call him. Anyway, Mrs. Blynn had shooed them all back. Elsie was standing against the closed door, ready to run out for something, ready to take any order. Near her was the smaller figure of Liza, who occasionally whispered something and was shushed by her mother. In an instant, Mrs. Palmer saw her entire life—her carefree childhood and youth, her happy marriage, the blight of the death of her other son at the age of ten, the shock of her husband's death eight years ago—but all in all a happy life, she supposed, though she could wish that her own character had been better, *purer*, that she had never shown temper or selfishness, for instance. All that was past now, but what remained was a feeling that she had been imperfect, wrong, like Mrs. Blynn's presence now, like Mrs. Blynn's faint smile, wrong, wrong for the time and the occasion. Mrs. Blynn did not understand her. Mrs. Blynn did not know her. Mrs. Blynn, somehow, could not comprehend good will. Therein lay the flaw, and the flaw of life itself. Life is a long failure of understanding, Mrs. Palmer thought, a long, mistaken shutting of the heart.

Mrs. Palmer had the amethyst pin in her closed left hand. Hours ago, sometime in the afternoon, she had taken it with an idea of safekeeping, but now she realized the absurdity of that. She had also wanted to give it to Gregory directly, and had forgotten. Her closed hand lifted an inch or so, her lips moved, but no sound came. She wanted to give it to Mrs. Blynn: one positive and generous gesture she could still make to this essence of nonunderstanding, she thought, but now she had not the strength to make her want known—and that was like life, too, everything a little too late. Mrs. Palmer's lids shut on the vision of Mrs. Blynn's glassy, attentive eyes. ♦

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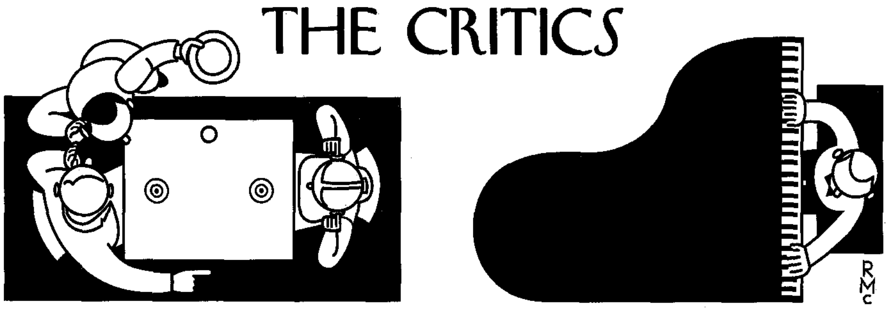


A CRITIC AT LARGE

THE TELEVISIONARY

Big business and the myth of the lone inventor.

BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

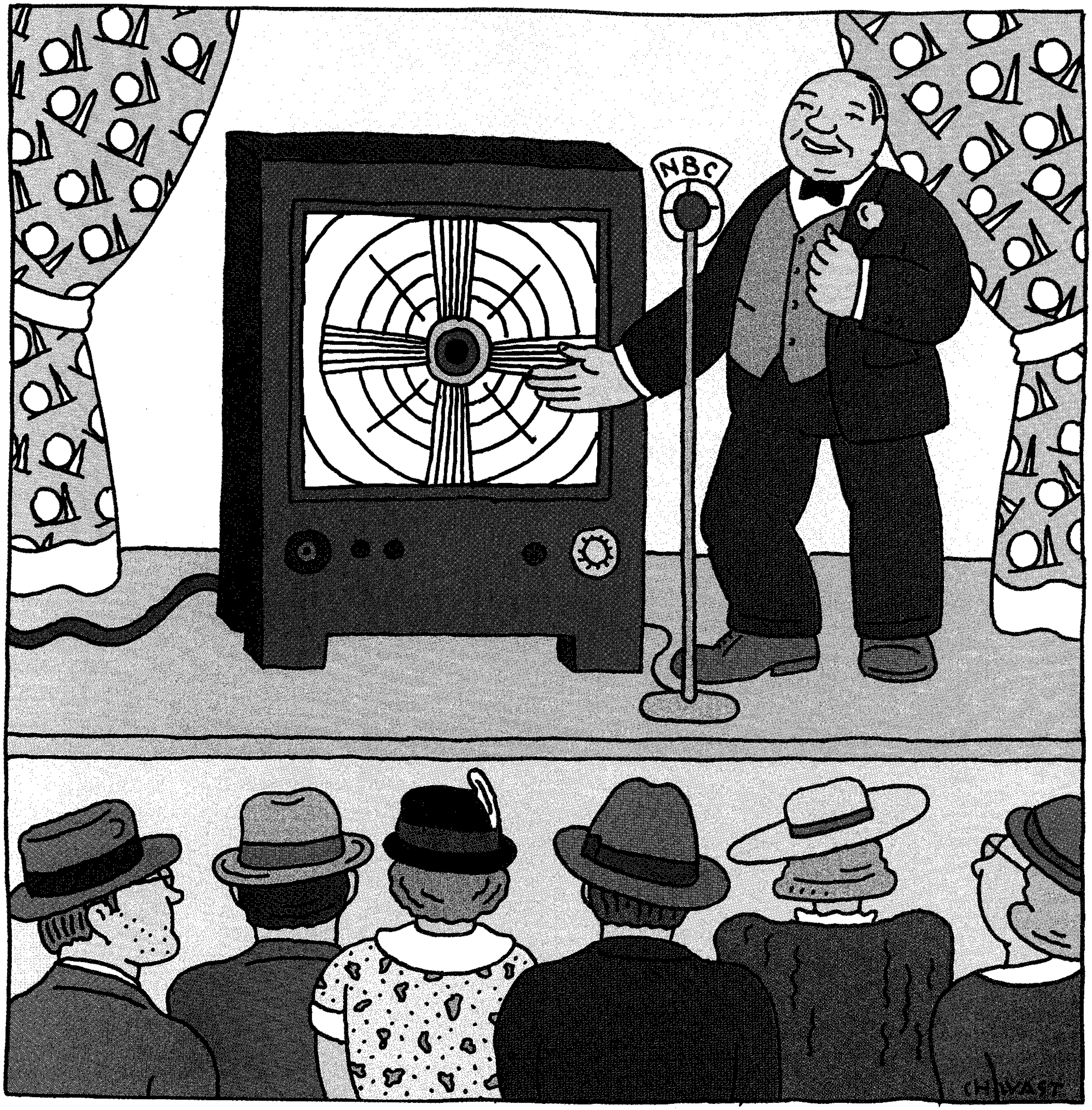
Philo T. Farnsworth was born in 1906, and he looked the way an inventor of that era was supposed to look: slight and gaunt, with bright-blue exhausted eyes, and a mane of brown hair swept back from his forehead. He was nervous and tightly wound. He rarely slept. He veered between fits of exuberance and depression. At the age of three, he was making precise drawings of the internal mechanisms of locomotives. At six, he declared his intention to follow in the footsteps of Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell. At fourteen, while tilling a potato field on his family's farm in Idaho, he saw the neat, parallel lines of furrows in front of him, and it occurred to him—in a single, blinding moment—that a picture could be sent electronically through the airwaves in the same way, broken down into easily transmitted lines and then reassembled into a complete picture at the other end. He went to see his high-school science teacher, and covered the blackboard with drawings and equations. At nineteen, after dropping out of college, he impressed two local investors with his brilliance and his conviction. He moved to California and set up shop in a tiny laboratory. He got married on an impulse. On his wedding night, he seized his bride by the shoulders and looked at her with those bright-blue eyes. "Pemmie," he said. "I have to tell you. There is another woman in my life—and her name is Television."

Philo T. Farnsworth was the inventor of television. Through the nineteen-thirties and forties, he engaged in a heroic battle to perfect and commercialize his discovery, fending off creditors and predators, and working himself to the point of emotional and physical exhaustion. His nemesis was David Sarnoff, the head of RCA, then one of the most powerful American electronics companies. Sarnoff lived in an enormous Upper East Side mansion and smoked fat cigars and travelled by chauffeured limousine. His top television researcher was Vladimir Zworykin, the scion of a wealthy Russian family, who wore elegant three-piece suits and round spectacles, had a Ph.D. in physics, and apprenticed with the legendary Boris Rosing at the St. Petersburg Institute of Technology. Zworykin was never more than half a step behind Farnsworth: he filed for a patent on his own version of electronic television two years after Farnsworth had his potato-field vision. At one point, Sarnoff sent Zworykin to Farnsworth's tiny laboratory, on Green Street in San Francisco, and he stayed for three days, asking suspiciously detailed questions. He had one of Farnsworth's engineers build the heart of Farnsworth's television system—the so-called image dissector—before his eyes, and then picked the tube up and turned it over in his hands and said, ominously, "This is a beautiful instrument. I wish I had invented it myself." Soon Sarnoff himself came out to Green Street, swept imperially through the laboratory, and declared, "There's nothing here we'll need." It was, of course, a lie. In the nineteen-thirties, television was not possible without Philo Farnsworth's work. But in the end it didn't much matter. Farnsworth's company was forced out of the TV business. Farnsworth had a nervous breakdown, and Sarnoff used his wealth and power to declare himself the father of television.

The life of Philo Farnsworth is the subject of two new books, "The Last Lone Inventor," by Evan I. Schwartz (HarperCollins; $24.95), and "The Boy Genius and the Mogul," by Daniel Stashower (Broadway; $24.95). It is a wonderful tale, riveting and bittersweet. But its lessons, on closer examination, are less straightforward than the clichés of the doomed inventor and the villainous mogul might suggest. Philo Farnsworth's travails make a rather strong case *for* big corporations, not against them.

The idea of television arose from two fundamental discoveries. The first was photoconductivity. In 1872, Joseph May and Willoughby Smith discovered that the electrical resistance of certain metals varied according to their exposure to light. And, since everyone knew how to transmit electricity from one place to another, it made sense that images could be transmitted as well. The second discovery was what is called visual persistence. In 1880, the French engineer Maurice LeBlanc pointed out that, because the human eye retains an image for about a tenth of a second, if you wanted to transmit a picture you didn't have to send it all at once. You could scan it, one line at a time, and, as long as you put all those lines back together at the other end within that fraction of a second, the human eye would be fooled into thinking that it was seeing a complete picture.

The hard part was figuring out how to do the scanning. In 1883, the German engineer Paul Nipkow devised an elaborate and ultimately unworkable system using a spinning metal disk. The disk was punctured with a spiral of small holes, and, as it spun, one line of light after another was projected through the holes onto a photocell. In 1908, a British electrical engineer named A. A. Campbell Swinton suggested that it would make more sense



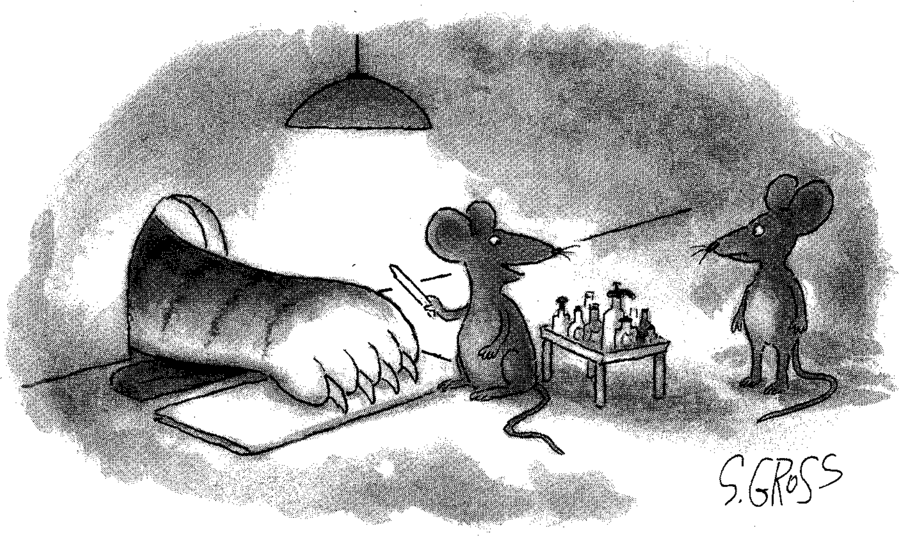
In a ceremony at the 1939 World's Fair, the head of RCA, David Sarnoff, effectively claimed Farnsworth's invention as his own.

SEYMOUR CHWAST

to scan images electronically, using a cathode ray. Philo Farnsworth was the first to work out how to do that. His image dissector was a vacuum tube with a lens at one end, a photoelectric plate right in front of the lens to convert the image from light to electricity, and then an "anode finger" to scan the electrical image line by line. After setting up his laboratory, Farnsworth tinkered with his makeshift television camera day and night for months. Finally, on September 7, 1927, he was ready. His wife, Pem, was by his side. His tiny television screen was in front of him. His brother-in-law, Cliff Gardner, was manning the television camera in a room at the other end of the lab. Stashower writes:

> Squaring his shoulders, Farnsworth took his place at the controls and flicked a series of switches. A small, bluish patch of light appeared at the end of the receiving tube. Farnsworth lifted his head and began calling out instructions to Gardner in the next room.
>
> "Put in the slide, Cliff," Farnsworth said.
>
> "Okay, it's in," Gardner answered. "Can you see it?"
>
> A faint but unmistakable line appeared across the receiving end of the tube. As Farnsworth made some adjustments, the line became more distinct.
>
> "Turn the slide a quarter turn, Cliff," Farnsworth called. Seconds later, the line on the receiving tube rotated ninety degrees. Farnsworth looked up from the tube. "That's it, folks," he announced with a tremor in his voice. "We've done it—there you have electronic television."

Both Stashower and Schwartz talk about how much meaning Farnsworth attached to this moment. He was a romantic, and in the romance of invention the creative process consists of two discrete, euphoric episodes, linked by long years of grit and hard work. First is the magic moment of conception: Farnsworth in the potato field. Second is the



"Every Thursday I do her nails."

• •

moment of execution: the day in the lab. If you had the first of those moments and not the second, you were a visionary. But if you had both you were in a wholly different category. Farnsworth must have known the story of King Gillette, the bottle-cap salesman, who woke up one morning in the summer of 1895 to find his razor dull. Gillette had a sudden vision: if all he wanted was a sharp edge, then why should he have to refashion the whole razor? Gillette later recalled:

> As I stood there with the razor in my hand, my eyes resting on it as lightly as a bird settling down on its nest, the Gillette razor was born—more with the rapidity of a dream than by a process of reasoning. In a moment I saw it all: the way the blade could be held in a holder; the idea of sharpening the two opposite edges on the thin piece of steel; the clamping plates for the blade, with a handle half-way between the two edges of the blade . . . I stood there before the mirror in a trance of joy. My wife was visiting Ohio and I hurriedly wrote to her: "I've got it! Our fortune is made!"

If you had the vision and you made the vision work, then the invention was *yours*—that was what Farnsworth believed. It belonged to you, just as the safety razor belonged to King Gillette.

But this was Farnsworth's mistake, because television wasn't at all like the safety razor. It didn't belong to one person. May and Smith stumbled across photoconductivity, and inspired LeBlanc, who, in turn, inspired Swinton, and Swinton's idea inspired inventors around the world. Then there was Zworykin, of course, and his mentor Boris Rosing, and the team of Max Dieckmann and Rudolf Hell, in Germany, who tried to patent something in the mid-twenties that was virtually identical to the image dissector. In 1931, when Zworykin perfected his own version of the television camera, called the Iconoscope, RCA did a worldwide patent search and found very similar patent applications from a Hungarian named Kolomon Tihany, a Canadian named François Henrouteau, a Japanese inventor named Kenjiro Takayanagi, two Englishmen, and a Russian. Everyone was working on television and everyone was reading everyone else's patent applications, and, because television was such a complex technology, nearly everyone had something new to add. Farnsworth came up with the first camera. Zworykin had the best early picture tube. And when Zworykin finally came up with his own camera it was not as good as Farnsworth's camera in some respects, but it was better in others. In September of 1939, when RCA finally licensed the rights to Farnsworth's essential patents, it didn't replace the Iconoscope with Farnsworth's image dissector. It took the best parts of both.

It is instructive to compare the early history of television with the development, some seventy-five years earlier, of the sewing machine. As the historian Grace Rogers Cooper points out, a sewing machine is really six different mechanisms in one—a means of supporting the cloth, a needle and a combining device to form the stitch, a feeding mechanism to allow one stitch to follow another, a means of insuring the even delivery of thread, and a governing mechanism to insure that each of the previous five steps is performed in sequence. Cooper writes in her book "The Sewing Machine":

> Weisenthal had added a point to the eye-end of the needle. Saint supported the fabric by placing it in a horizontal position with a needle entering vertically, Duncan successfully completed a chainstitch for embroidery purposes, Chapman used a needle with an eye at its point and did not pass it completely through the fabric, Krems stitched circular caps with an eye-pointed needle used with a hook to form a chainstitch, Thimmonier used the hooked needle to form a chainstitch on a fabric laid horizontally, and Hunt created a new stitch that was more readily adapted to sewing by machine than the hand stitches had been.

The man generally credited with combining and perfecting these elements is Elias Howe, a machinist from Boston. But even Howe's patents were quickly superseded by a new round of patents, each taking one of the principles of his design and either augmenting it or replacing it. The result was legal and commercial gridlock, broken only when, in 1856, Howe and three of the leading sewing-machine manufacturers (among them Isaac Merritt Singer, who gave the world the sewing-machine foot pedal) agreed to pool their patents and form a trust. It was then that the sewing-machine business took off. For the sewing machine to succeed, in other words, those who saw themselves as sewing-machine inventors had to swallow their pride and concede that the machine was larger than they were—that groups, not individuals, invent complex technologies. That was what Farnsworth could not do, and it explains the terrible turn that his life took.

David Sarnoff's RCA had a very strict policy on patents. If you worked for RCA and you invented something patentable, it belonged to RCA. Your name was on the patent, and you got credit for your work. But you had to sign over your rights for one dollar. In "The Last Lone Inventor," Schwartz tells the story of an RCA engineer who thought the system was so absurd that he would paste his one-dollar checks to the wall of his office—until the accounting department, upset with the unresolved balance on its books, steamed them off and forced him to cash them. At the same time, Sarnoff was a patient and generous benefactor. When Zworykin and Sarnoff discussed television for the first time, in 1929, Zworykin promised the RCA chief that he would create a working system in two years, at a cost of a hundred thousand dollars. In fact, it took more than ten years and fifty million dollars, and through all those years—which just happened to coincide with the Depression—Sarnoff's support never wavered. Sarnoff "hired the best engineers out of the best universities," Schwartz writes. "He paid them competitive salaries, provided them with ample research budgets, and offered them a chance to join his crusade to change the world, working in the most dynamic industry the world had ever seen." What Sarnoff presented was a compromise. In exchange for control over the fruits of invention, he gave his engineers the freedom to invent.

Farnsworth didn't want to relinquish that control. Both RCA and General Electric offered him a chance to work on television in their laboratories. He turned them both down. He wanted to go it alone. This was the practical consequence of his conviction that television was *his*, and it was, in retrospect, a grievous error. It meant that Farnsworth was forced to work in a state of chronic insecurity. He never had enough money. He feuded constantly with his major investor, a man named Jesse McCargar, who didn't have the resources to play the television game. At the time of what should have been one of Farnsworth's greatest triumphs—the granting of his principal patents—McCargar showed up at the lab complaining about costs, and made Farnsworth fire his three star engineers. When, in 1928, the Green Street building burned down, a panicked Farnsworth didn't know whether or not his laboratory was insured. It was, as it happened, but a second laboratory, in Maine, wasn't, and when it burned down, years later, he lost everything. Twice, he testified before Congress. The first time, he rambled off on a tangent about transmission bandwidth which left people scratching their heads. The second time, he passed up a perfect opportunity to register his complaints about RCA, and launched, instead, into a sentimental account of his humble origins. He simply did not understand how to play politics, just as he did not understand how to raise money or run a business or organize his life. All he really knew how to do was invent, which was something that, as a solo operator, he too seldom had time for.

This is the reason that so many of us work for big companies, of course: in a big company, there is always someone to do what we do not want to do or do not do well—someone to answer the phone, and set up our computer, and arrange our health insurance, and clean our office at night, and make sure the building is insured. In a famous 1937 essay, "The Nature of the Firm," the economist Ronald Coase said that the reason we have corporations is to reduce the everyday transaction costs of doing business: a company puts an accountant on the staff so that if a staffer needs to check the books all he has to do is walk down the hall. It's an obvious point, but one that is consistently overlooked, particularly by those who periodically rail, in the name of efficiency, against corporate bloat and superfluous middle managers. Yes, the middle manager does not always contribute directly to the bottom line. But he does contribute to those who contribute to the bottom line, and only an absurdly truncated account of human productivity—one that assumes real work to be somehow possible when phones are ringing, computers are crashing, and health insurance is expiring—does not see that secondary contribution as valuable.

In April, 1931, Sarnoff showed up at the Green Street laboratory to review Farnsworth's work. This was, by any measure, an extraordinary event. Farnsworth was twenty-four, and working out of a ramshackle building. Sarnoff was one of the leading industrialists of his day. It was as if Bill Gates were to get in his private jet and visit a software startup in a garage across the country. But Farnsworth wasn't there. He was in New York, trapped

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there by a court order resulting from a frivolous lawsuit filed by a shady would-be investor. Stashower calls this one of the great missed opportunities of Farnsworth's career, because he almost certainly would have awed Sarnoff with his passion and brilliance, winning a lucrative licensing deal. Instead, an unimpressed Sarnoff made a token offer of a hundred thousand dollars for Farnsworth's patents, and Farnsworth dismissed the offer out of hand. This, too, is a reason that inventors ought to work for big corporations: big corporations have legal departments to protect their employees against being kept away from their laboratories by frivolous lawsuits. A genius is a terrible thing to waste.

In 1939, at the World's Fair in New York City, David Sarnoff set up a nine-thousand-square-foot pavilion to showcase the new technology of television. The pavilion, shaped like a giant radio tube, was covered with RCA logos, and stood next to the Perisphere Theatre, the centerpiece of the fairgrounds. On opening day, thirty thousand people gathered to hear from President Roosevelt and Albert Einstein. The gala was televised by RCA, beamed across the New York City area from the top of the Empire State Building. As it happened, Farnsworth was in New York City that day, and he caught the opening ceremonies on a television in a department-store window. He saw Sarnoff introducing both Roosevelt and Einstein, and effectively claiming this wondrous new technology as his own. "Farnsworth's entire existence seemed to be annulled in this moment," Schwartz writes:

> The dreams of a farm boy, the eureka moment in a potato field, the confession to a teacher, the confidence in him shown by businessmen and bankers and investors, the breakthroughs in the laboratory, all the years of work, the decisions of the official patent examiners, those hard-fought victories, all of those demonstrations that had come and gone, the entire vision of the future. All of it was being negated by Sarnoff's performance at the World's Fair. Would the public ever know the truth? . . . The agony of it set off sharp pains in his stomach.

Finally, later that summer, RCA settled with Farnsworth. It agreed to pay him a million dollars for the rights to his main patents, plus royalties on every television set sold. But it was too late. Something had died in him. "It's come to the point of choosing whether I want to be a drunk or go crazy," he told his wife. One doctor prescribed chloral hydrate, which destroyed his appetite and left him dangerously thin. Another doctor prescribed cigarettes, to soothe his nerves. A third prescribed uppers. He became addicted to the painkiller Pantipon. He committed himself to a sanitarium in Massachusetts, where he was given a course of shock therapy. After the war, his brother died in a plane crash. His patents expired, drying up his chief source of income. His company, unable to compete with RCA, was forced out of the television business. He convinced himself that he could unlock the secrets of nuclear fusion, and launched another private research project, mortgaging his home, selling his stock, and cashing in his life insurance to fund the project. But nothing came of it. He died in 1971—addicted to alcohol, deeply depressed, and all but forgotten. He was sixty-four.

"Last time I told him you were here, he seemed to be getting increasingly interested."

In "Tube," a history of television, David E. Fisher and Marshall Jon Fisher point out that Farnsworth was not the only television pioneer to die in misery. So did two others—John Logie Baird and Charles Francis Jenkins—who had tried and failed to produce mechanical television. This should not come as a surprise. The creative enterprise is a hazardous journey, and those who venture on it alone do so at their peril. Baird and Jenkins and Farnsworth risked their psychological and financial well-being on the romantic notion of the solitary inventor, and when that idea failed them what resources did they have left? Zworykin had his share of setbacks as well. He took on Farnsworth in court, and lost. He promised television in two years for a hundred thousand dollars and he came in eight years and fifty million dollars over budget. But he ended his life a prosperous and contented man, lauded and laurelled with awards and honorary degrees. He had the cocoon of RCA to protect him: a desk and a paycheck and a pension and a secretary and a boss with the means to rewrite history in his favor. This is perhaps a more important reason that we have companies—or, for that matter, that we have universities and tenure. Institutions are not just the best environment for success; they are also the safest environment for failure—and, much of the time, failure is what lies in store for innovators and visionaries. Philo Farnsworth should have gone to work for RCA. He would still have been the father of television, and he might have died a happy man. ♦

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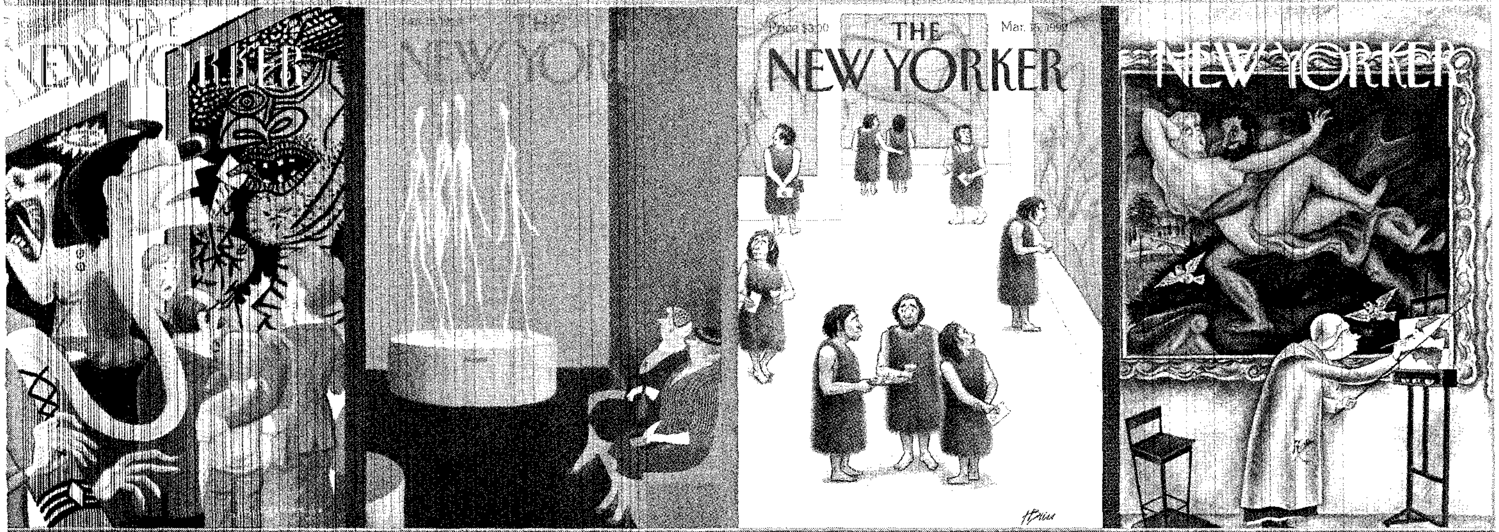

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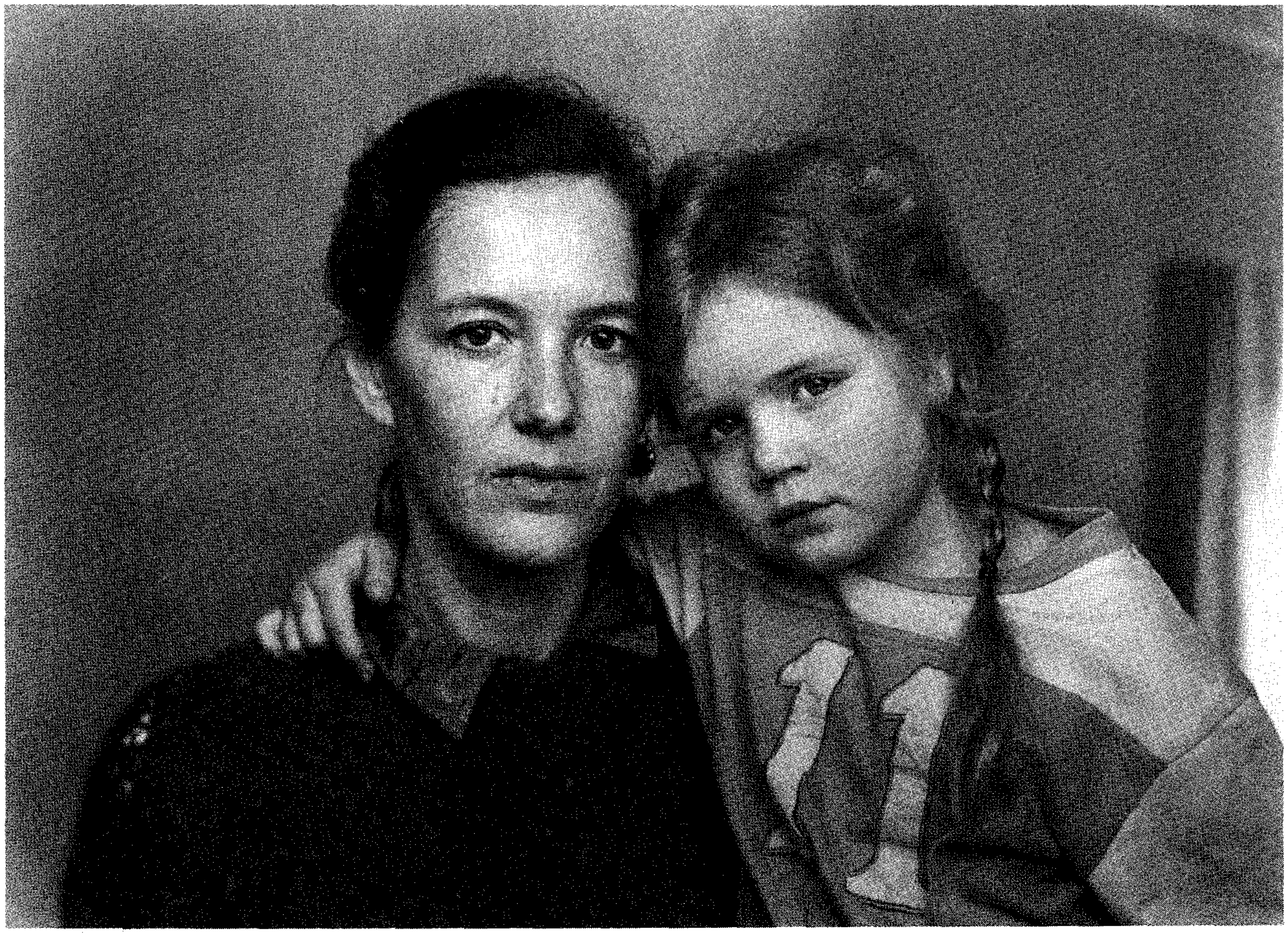
THE ART WORLD

REALITY CLICKS

Thomas Struth renovates photography.

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

German masters are on the march in America this year. First came Gerhard Richter, the philosopher king of contemporary painting, in a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art. Now there's the towering photographer Thomas Struth, in a retrospective at the Dallas Museum of Art, which was organized by Charles Wylie, one of the museum's curators of contemporary art. (The show will travel to Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago.) The two artists are easily linked, and not just because Struth, who is forty-seven, was a student of Richter's at the Düsseldorf Art Academy in the mid-nineteen-seventies. Struth credits Richter with steering him away from painting and into photography, where his mentor was the great minimalist Bernd Becher. Like Richter, Struth is a comprehensive adept who grounds his medium in a premodern, even Beaux-Arts order of genres. He pioneered the aesthetics of the huge color print with a painting-like presence, which has become standard fare in museums and galleries; but he continues to do revelatory things in smaller formats, too. It's as if, while other photographers make photographs, Struth were making photography, reinventing it from top to bottom. Struth's importance has dawned slowly in the United States, as Richter's did, perhaps because he exercises a degree of intelligence that can, at first, baffle and even intimidate.



Struth's 1987 portrait of Hannah Erdrich-Hartmann and Jana-Maria Hartmann: Waiting for the vibrant moment.

Struth grew up near Düsseldorf, where he still lives when he's not travelling the globe. His father, a banker, was initially skeptical of his desire to become an artist; his mother, a potter, was all for it. By way of compromise, they supported him in art school on the condition that he study the teaching of art. The pressure may help explain his drive. From the start, Struth displayed an affinity for the self-effacing, subject-centered photographic tradition whose lodestars are Eugène Atget, August Sander, and Walker Evans. He invariably works with a view camera, using available light. His cityscapes, landscapes, portraits, pictures of people in museums and churches, florals, and jungle pictures—taken throughout Europe, America, China, Japan, and Australia—share a spirit of absorptive scrutiny. Choice examples of all these genres are displayed in Dallas, in a plangent, symphonic hanging that brings out their fundamental unity. Like Richter's many painting styles, Struth's various modes do not go off in different directions but, rather, converge on a singular essence: in his case, the world according to photography. Temperamentally conservative, he avoids obvious social commentary, and he has shunned the lately popular trickeries of digital manipulation. (In the latter regard, he differs sharply from his contemporary Andreas Gursky, whose vast, splashy visions of globalized commerce are entertaining but—literally—unbelievable.) Struth's only interest is in what straight photography can say. Who would have suspected that it could say so much?

Struth's twenty-five years of mature work began with black-and-white cityscapes that hew closely to the documentary dogmatism of Bernd and Hilla Becher, who have made hundreds of austere, head-on photographs of old industrial structures (water towers, blast furnaces) according to strict rules. (The subject must be exactly centered, for example, and the sky must be overcast in order to suppress shadows.) Struth pointed his camera down the middle of early-morning, deserted streets, producing pictures that center on nothing. Gradually, as one looks at them, complex information floods in from the peripheries, as if the ranks of buildings had become garrulous in the telling of their stories. Such is the character of the Bechers' minimalism, which stalks objectivity by reducing authorial decisions to a self-evident system. The Bechers rejected modern ideals of expressive form, such as Edward Weston's metaphorical grandeur and Cartier-Bresson's "decisive moment." When their approach works, a picture delivers a sense of reality with the directness of a body blow. I remember my shock, in the late nineteen-seventies, upon encountering Struth's shots of familiar SoHo streets. Even after years of walking down Crosby or Greene (ungentrified, slovenly locales then), I plainly knew very little about them. I had been blind to actualities that were in constant flux around me. Today, those early Struth pictures, whose style is timeless, stir a primal nostalgia like that of Atget's scenes of Paris. Struth returned to his street formula for a tour de force soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall, documenting unbombed, dilapidated East German cities that were like spectral zones of a frozen past.

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In the nineteen-eighties, Struth began to extend his range of photographic minimalism by creating portraits of an uncanny intensity. Rarely commissioned, these pictures show people whom Struth knows well. They convey psychological states whose point of focus is the sitters' willingness to be photographed with a vulnerability that bespeaks extraordinary trust in the photographer. As I meet the soft, confiding gaze of a woman in a red scarf—a former girlfriend of Struth's—I can think of few other individual portraits, short of Rembrandt's, that give me so strong a sense of being handed a soul.

Struth's family portraits are exceptional. To make them, he lets the sitters arrange themselves in their homes. Standing beside his camera, he issues one instruction: look at the lens. He then waits for the instant in which every family member is vibrantly present. Viewing these pictures is like facing a firing squad of relaxed but implacable gazes. The constellation of individuals—their identities fleshed out in body language and augmented by details of clothing and décor—suggests a wide-open book, in which every family secret is bared. But to read the book would involve analysis, which is reductive thought; the range of nuance in these pictures is irreducible and overwhelming.

The family portraits—tableaux of love and ambivalence—express the central idea in Struth's work: the humbling force of superficially serene but deeply irrational relationships, beginning with the one between the photographer and the world. The key consideration for photographers is the choice of subject matter, and on this Struth rests the full weight and mystery of his art. Why document perfectly ordinary buildings in Berlin or Naples, or a disheartening public-housing project in Chicago? Why a high-tech train facility in Tokyo, an early-morning view of Times Square, or the familiar façade of the Milan Cathedral? Why tourists dwarfed by the grandeur of Yosemite or of the Pantheon in Rome? What's the point in looking at big photographs of people looking at big paintings in the Louvre or the Art Institute of Chicago? Why rain forests? (I asked Struth how jungles in Japan manage to look Japanese, as they certainly do in his pictures of them. He said, "They don't have many jungles left there. They keep ones that they like.") In a few instances, we are given reasons for the photographer's choice of subjects: the tender, close-up flower portraits and lyrical Swiss landscapes were a project—the loveliest imaginable—for decorating convalescent rooms in a Swiss hospital. More generally, one surmises that Struth may not understand his attraction to a subject until he has photographed it, if then. No matter how meticulously conceived a picture may look, it also achieves a feeling of epiphany—a heightened sense of existence in the shutter click's here and now.

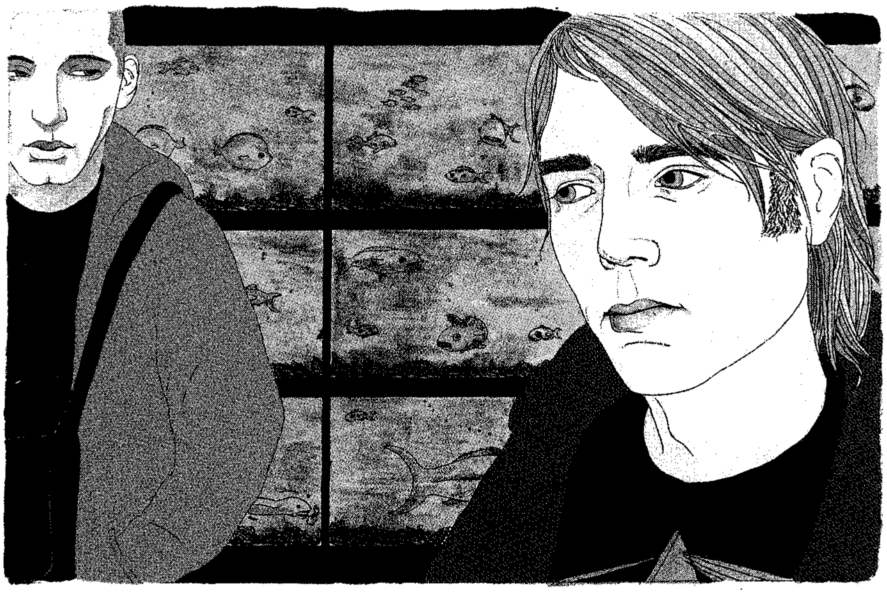
If Struth has a weakness, it is a potential for overreaching. A picture from last year shows him looking at the great self-portrait of Dürer in Munich. As it happens, a spiritual kinship between Struth and the god of German art could fairly be adduced, but Struth may not be the best person to adduce it. A current show at the Marian Goodman Gallery, in New York, of new work by Struth—large-scale photographs of people at the Pergamon Museum of ancient Near Eastern art and architecture, in Berlin—suggests hubris. After failing to get satisfactory pictures of ordinary museumgoers, Struth brought in a crowd of his own choosing. The pictures are grand and beautiful, but the subtle self-consciousness of the "viewers" proves deadening. There is an ineffable but fatal difference in attitude between people behaving naturally and people behaving naturally for a camera. (I'm confident of this judgment because I felt the off-putting effect of these pictures before learning its cause.) Nonetheless, it wouldn't say much for Struth's ambition if he didn't experiment. Such slips as he has had expose just how lofty and demanding is the normal standard of his art, which combines both lucid intellect and an almost saintly humility. Like Atget and Evans, Struth suggests that photography is not a way for us to possess reality but a way to be possessed by it. ♦

THE THEATRE

WHATEVER

Neil LaBute turns psychology into behavior.

BY JOHN LAHR



Jason Ritter and Mark Webber as teen-age slackers in "The Distance from Here."

In years to come, when Neil LaBute's "The Distance from Here" (at London's Almeida Theatre) is written about—and it will be written about—critics will focus on the moment, at a run-down American zoo, when a gangly, jealous, teen-age slacker, Darrell (the subtle Mark Webber), dandles a sports bag in front of his outraged girlfriend, Jenn (Liesel Matthews), and his credulous sidekick, Tim (the excellent Jason Ritter), who he thinks have betrayed him. Darrell is trying to blackmail them into some straight talk; and, when he finally gets it, he throws the bag over the wall behind him and into the penguin pool. The bag contains his infant nephew.

Although the barbarity of that scene echoes Edward Bond's banned 1965 play, "Saved," in which a baby is stoned to death by a group of bored British louts, LaBute's astutely realized climate of unboundaried emotional confusion sets his play apart and asserts an equal claim to greatness. In "The Distance from Here"—as in his movies "In the Company of Men" and "Your Friends and Neighbors," both of which began as plays—LaBute's job description remains staunchly the same: to force the audience to stare at the terrible so as to fathom it. Like any man who believes in sin (he is a practicing Mormon, although his play "Bash" got him "disfellowshipped" by the Church elders), LaBute does not trivialize darkness but treats it with proper awe. "Sometimes we kill our heart in order not to feel," Tennessee Williams said. "The Distance from Here" is a thrilling demonstration of that contention.

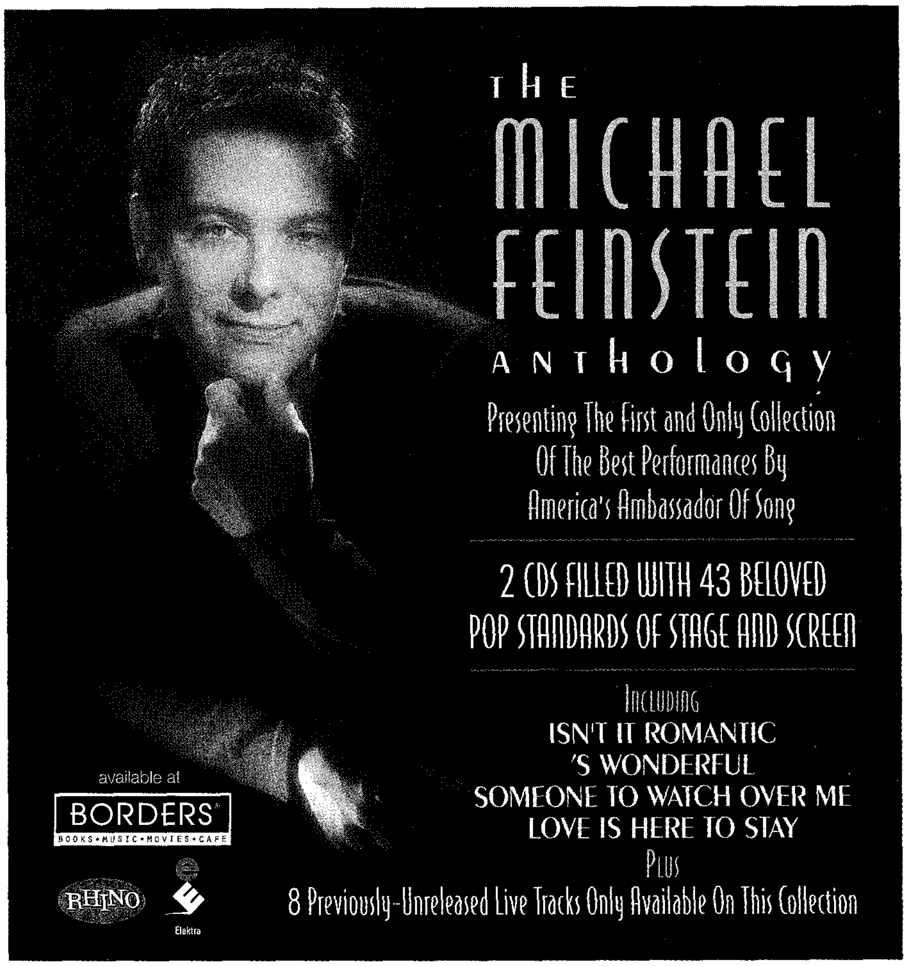
The suffocating and pyschopathic world that Darrell inhabits is foreshadowed at the opening, when he and Tim taunt monkeys at the zoo, under a sign that reads "PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE ANIMALS." As the play's troubling scenes of appetite and unconscious aggression unfold, so does the depth of the characters' dehumanization—until the sign, on reflection, comes to seem like an ironic epigram to their brutish lives. "A bullshit life!" Darrell shouts at the shrieking monkeys. "Twelve-by-twelve pen's your kingdom and you don't know shit about *whatever.*" That sly last line—its crowing superiority and its unabashed stupidity—is typical of LaBute's satirical brilliance. "They got nothing on us," Tim adds. Indeed, they don't. LaBute's characters are as blank as the gray-green walls that surround them, unwilling and unable to make the effort of thought. They have no moral compass, only impulse, and their syntactical stammer, a sort of lazy verbal shorthand—"No biggie," "Worry about it," "'Kay," "The fuck outta here"—broadcasts their intellectual vacuum. Without words, they can't define themselves—to themselves or to others. Like the jabbering monkeys that so infuriate Darrell, the *Homo sapiens* in his circle tear at one another's flesh in an attempt to lose themselves in dumb sensation.

In David Leveaux's stark and well-managed production, the first family scene plunges us directly into the atmosphere of sexual confusion that has so discombobulated Darrell. In a cheap and cheerful living room, we meet Darrell's voluptuous and vacant half sister, Shari (Ana Reeder), and her baby; his perky mother, Cammie (Amy Ryan); and her new boyfriend, Rich (Enrico Colantoni). But such is the nature of this highly charged household that it's unclear at first how these people are connected. Shari and Cammie, who are conspicuously comfortable with each other physically, also appear to be vying for Rich's attention. As Rich kicks back on the sofa and nuzzles up to Cammie, Shari settles in on his other side. "Well, ain't this just cozy?" he says, and they all giggle. Later, Darrell sits on the sofa as his mother and Rich make out beside him. "Careful there, Rich, fucking tongue a' hers'll be snaking down your throat," Darrell jokes. Then, in a shocking gesture, Cammie turns to Darrell and plants a long, lingering kiss on his mouth, a kiss that is meant to force him away. LaBute has a wonderful time deconstructing the semaphore of gesture, and this annihilating kiss is emblematic. No one in Darrell's family acts like an adult or respects a boundary enough to set one. Over time, Darrell is betrayed by his mother, who can't remember his childhood ("You're on your own with the Kodak memories and shit"); by Shari, who in her randy loneliness suggests that they sleep together; and by Rich, who is having it off with Shari and, on the night her son turns up missing, proposes that they run off together and start a new life. "Be so great . . . to be together," Shari says, straddling him. "You know, like you said, but to do something really different,

LARA TOMLIN

too. I mean, some kinda thing that nobody'd expect outta us. You and me. (*Beat.*) Maybe add a deck, or a patio." In this threadbare universe, consuming is perceived as the only redemption. The cycle of betrayal comes full circle with Darrell's sudden murderous act. What we witness is the death of not one infant but two. Darrell hates the bleating, neglected baby because it's him; he wastes it as he has been wasted in his family. When the tragic moment occurs, it's an indication of LaBute's prowess that we experience it as both a surprise and an inevitability.

There is a whiff of homosexuality in several of LaBute's works, but "The Distance from Here" is his fullest exploration of the theme. Surrounded by men and women who are predatory and amoral, Darrell has no appropriate sexual models, and his ungrounded desire plays itself out in ambivalent behavior. When a high-school femme fatale comes on to him, he pulls back from her embrace. With boys, on the other hand, he is constantly punching, tugging, wrestling. In horseplay, Darrell licks Tim's face; and, in their final brutal quarrel over the baby, he grabs Tim fiercely in the crotch before pulverizing him with the lid of a garbage can. He also ends up in a suggestive flesh pile with Rich. "You fucking want me!!" he says, as Rich lies on top of him. "You like me, don't ya." Darrell, of course, isn't sure who—if anybody—wants or likes him, which also helps to explain his obsessive jealousy. The baby's murder puts him beyond desire and desiring. His relationship with Jenn crumbles before his eyes. In a heartbreaking final speech, just before he bolts from the scene, Darrell says, "Guess I'll just keep driving, you know? Go upstate, maybe, fuck if I know. Just run like rabbits. Headlights blasting, signposts whipping by, fucking squirrels and shit diving to get outta my way!" Darrell isn't so much a lost soul as soul-murdered. His fantasy is a dream of penetration and power. Speed becomes destiny, the only momentum he will ever know—he's going nowhere, but fast. LaBute, in his most ambitious and best play to date, gets inside the emptiness of American culture, the masquerade of pleasure and the evil of neglect. "The Distance from Here," it seems to me, is a new title to be added to the short list of important contemporary plays. ♦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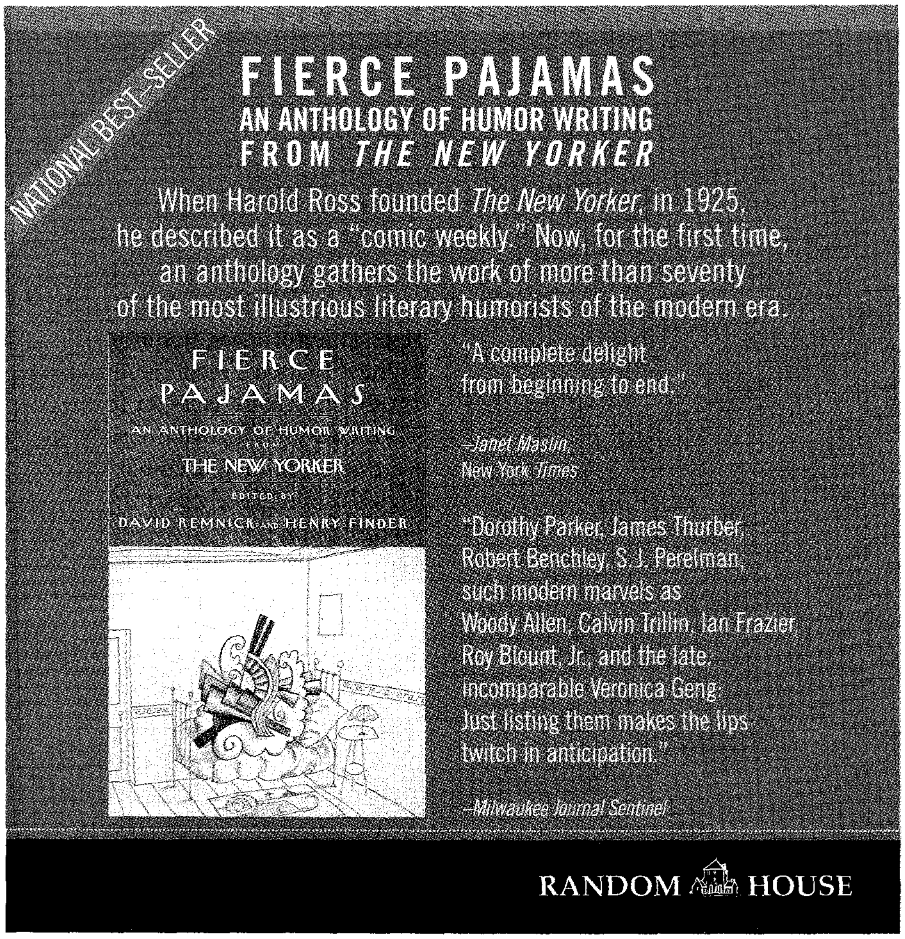
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MUSICAL EVENTS

JOURNEY'S END

Yo-Yo Ma's Asian trek; Pavarotti's no-show.

BY ALEX ROSS

Everybody likes Yo-Yo Ma—no one can get enough of him. Kramer, on "Seinfeld," once shouted his name for the sheer joy of it. Being universally adored has made it harder for the cellist to leave the glamorous rut of a jet-set career, but in the past decade he has struck out on his own, using his fame to underwrite his passions. He has made some abstruse choices along the way; not everyone believed him as a tango player, and not everyone made it through his filmic fantasias on the Bach cello suites. But any man who has had to play Dvořák's Cello Concerto over and over with a beatific smile on his face deserves to do as he pleases in his spare time.

With the Silk Road Project, a nomadic festival of the music and musicians of Central Asia, Ma has hit the mother lode. This is an opulently detailed exposition of a simple but potent idea: that music is on some level the same everywhere, and that classical music is no longer a European art. Here, at Carnegie Hall, under the auspices of a Chinese-American musician, were composers and performers from Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, Iran, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Turkey, and Uzbekistan. The European tradition was represented by two Frenchmen (Debussy, Ravel) and a lone Russian (Shostakovich). The only German music that was heard in three long evenings was Beethoven's "Für Elise," courtesy of an errant cell phone.

Ma undertook the Silk Road Project after becoming fascinated by the spread of musical styles, instruments, and playing techniques along the old trading routes between the Far East and the Mediterranean. In the first millennium, Central Asia had a magnificent cosmopolitan culture, and Ma wished to summon up the ghosts of its glory by musical means. He decided to bring together musicians of various Asian countries with leading composers from the region. He could not have anticipated the element of heartbreak that would enter into this utopian mingling of Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist cultures in the months after September 11th.

The series began with the fantastically powerful and eerie voice of the Mongolian "long song" singer Khongorzul Ganbaatar. This set a pattern of alternating "roots" music, as the program notes called it, with works written for Ma and his ensemble. The great Azerbaijani singer Alim Qasimov demonstrated his passionate assimilation of the *mugham*, the Azerbaijani version of the monumental Islamic art-music genre the *maqam*. The Ilyas Malaev Ensemble, a group of Bukharan Jewish musicians formerly of Uzbekistan and now of Forest Hills, performed their own delicately ornamented variation on the *maqam* while wearing the brilliant garb of Muslim court entertainers. Certain modal patterns, especially that of the lowered second, were common to all this music, suggesting that some Jews and Muslims once sang alike.

What can a composer add to this welter of tradition? Critics of cultural appropriation will complain that style tourists like Debussy and Ravel used Eastern touches as exotic flavor, and they will have a point. But a work such as Shostakovich's Piano Trio digs deeper, throwing itself wholeheartedly into a stomping dance out of deepest Yiddishkeit. The best of the new works in the Silk Road series echoed the Russian master in dropping the mask of modernist detachment. In "Dervish," the Azerbaijani composer Franghiz Ali-Zadeh matched twentieth-century techniques with the piercing directness of *mugham*. Vache Sharafyan's "The Sun, the Wine, and the Wind of Time" melded Shostakovichian string laments with the droning melodies of the Caucasian *duduk* (a woodwind). The Iranian-born Kayhan

Kalhor achieved the ultimate synthesis in his "Blue as the Turquoise Night of Neyshabur"; this was a written-out work that surged with improvisatory energy, erasing differences between Western and Eastern styles.

There were so many kinds of virtuosity on display that Ma's own contribution almost got lost in the shuffle. Perhaps he wanted it this way; of all virtuosos, he is the most eager to blend in, to be a worker among workers. Even so, his tone sang out with a force and focus that I had not heard from him in a while. The series ended with a scalding performance of the Ravel Trio, in which Ma was joined by the pianist Joel Fan and the violinist Colin Jacobsen, his hardworking Western-style collaborators throughout the series. In light of what had come before, the Ravel felt like a palace perched on a jagged ridge—an immaculate creation bound to ancient forces.

"FAT MAN WON'T SING," read the collectible front page of the *Post* on May 10th. The paper was correct in predicting that Luciano Pavarotti would cancel his rumored farewell appearance at the Met's end-of-season gala the following night. Patrons had paid up to eighteen hundred and seventy-five dollars to hear the big man one last time. He had been contracted to sing two performances of "Tosca"; he arrived in New York, sang the dress rehearsal, and came down with what was described as "influenza." On both nights, he waffled, said no, said yes, then cancelled shortly before the curtain went up. Joseph Volpe, the general manager, was not amused. Twice he had to apologize to a groaning crowd. The second time, visibly fuming, he recounted his conversation with Pavarotti, which included the superbly ominous sentence "This is a hell of a way to end this beautiful career of yours." As Baron Scarpia would have said, "*Va, Luciano.*"

If this really is the end—and Volpe has a history of kicking superstars into oblivion—it is something of a tragedy. Anyone who thinks of Pavarotti as the butt of late-night talk-show jokes should remember that he was at one time an impeccably stylish singer of Italian opera—perhaps the most naturally gifted lyric tenor of the past fifty years. Even in his present dilapidated condition, he has automatic access to a pure bel-canto style that sounds artificial in the throat of every other singer, Plácido Domingo included. Pavarotti tended lovingly to a fragile tradition; he helped carry the Met through a bleak financial period in the seventies and eighties. Even in his "Three Tenors" dotage, he made opera matter to millions. Audiences responded not only to the voice but also to the face—that bright, open, generous countenance. So it was sad to see him test the affection of his public to the breaking point.

Salvatore Licitra, the rising star of La Scala, flew in from Milan at the last possible minute to sing Cavaradossi in Pavarotti's place. The young tenor overcame formidable obstacles—the inevitable pressure of a Met début, the added pressure of replacing a legend, the Antarctic ice-floe tempos of James Levine—to make a powerful impression. His tenor lacks the supernatural ease of Pavarotti's in its prime; the lower register is weak, the middle uneven. But he has thrilling, ringing high notes—they are sung, not hollered—and he cannily shapes his phrases to make his top-heaviness seem a dramatic necessity. In all, he easily held his own against the campily gripping Tosca of Maria Guleghina, not to mention the strangely muted Scarpia of James Morris.

Is this the tenor of tomorrow, the long-awaited successor to Pavarotti and Domingo? Possibly yes, to judge from the "Tosca" and a "Ballo in Maschera" I heard in Milan last year. In Licitra's best moments, he actually sounds like an ideal blend of the two mega-tenors, echoing both Pavarotti's fluency and Domingo's fire. He has a combination of musicality and power that is essential for the Italian repertory. He moves around an opera stage as if he belonged there. He lingered for a long time during the huge ovation that greeted him at the end: it was hard to tell if he was genuinely stunned or was savoring a moment that he had long been expecting. A new Pavarotti? Be careful what you wish for. ♦

Yo-Yo Ma with his intrepid Silk Road performers: from left, Alim Qasimov, Kayhan Kalhor, Colin Jacobsen, and Wu Man. Photograph by Dudley Reed.

THE CURRENT CINEMA

ODD COUPLES

"Insomnia" and "Late Marriage."

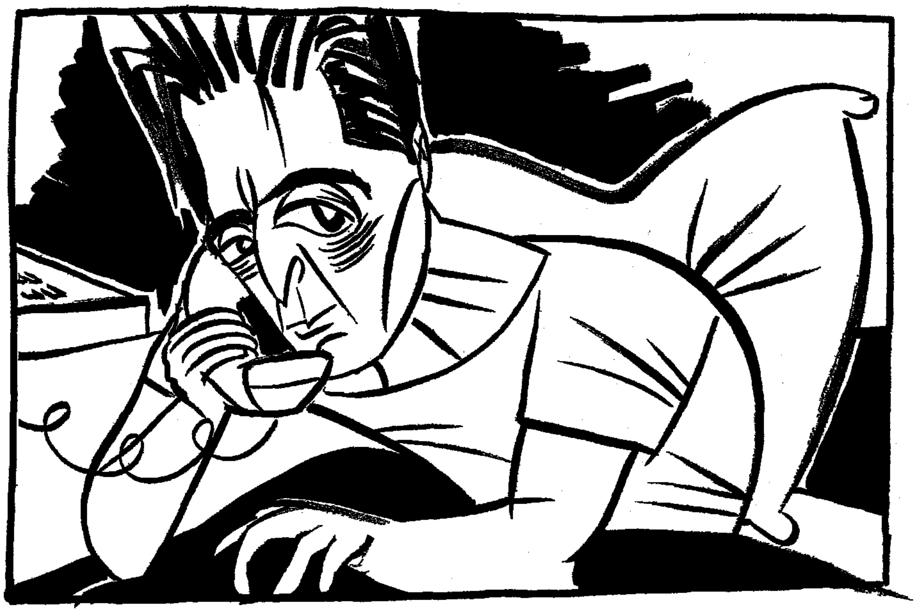
BY ANTHONY LANE

The new Christopher Nolan film, "Insomnia," began life as a Norwegian film of the same name, made in 1997. In adapting the movie for the American market, Warner Bros. had to find a new setting. Norway was out, but what was in? The story calls for something remote, unapproachable yet frostily compelling, like Nicole Kidman's smile. In the end, the studio plumped for Alaska, and a singular sight it is, too; as the camera peers from a plane in the opening sequence, you can't tell whether you're gazing down upon the icy, immeasurable wastes of a forbidden planet or through an electron microscope.

In the plane is Will Dormer (Al Pacino), a detective from the L.A.P.D., who looks not merely pooped but likely to expire before the plot has a chance to begin. (Why, exactly, he has come all this way is never explained; are there really no reliable sleuths between Los Angeles and the northern wilderness?) Small and shrunken, spectre-gray, Pacino spends most of the movie behaving like a vampire who hasn't had a decent bite in weeks. What we don't get, behind the world-weariness, is much sense of the world that has wearied him in the first place. All we know is that, back in California, Internal Affairs is sniffing like dogs around his past, and that it is using his younger partner, Hap (Martin Donovan), to close in on its chosen prey. Both men are far away now, in the fastness of Alaska, and you are torn between trying to reconstruct their history together, with its dents of corruption, and wanting them to press on with the crime at hand.

This is the killing of a young woman in the sullen, fictitious town of Nightmute. The name is a touch overloaded, but you could say the same of Dormer, who spends the whole movie trying, unsuccessfully, to grab some sleep. Nightmute is "the halibut-fishing capital of the world," as Dormer is pleased to note on his arrival, and he is convinced that the fishiness of the murder is about to spread. His inquiries are aided by an eager Nightmute cop, Ellie Burr (Hilary Swank), whose duties include hunting for clues, waiting for the bloom to fade on her innocent soul, and making the coffee.

Dormer and Hap get their break—and, though we don't know it at the time, the movie reaches its peak—when the police stake out a hut on the shoreline. Along comes a local suspect, and so does the fog: another specialty of the region, and apparently made from the same heavy, weepy substance as Al Pacino. In the whiteout of confusion, Dormer fires his weapon and discovers, to what we trust is his horror, that he has taken the life of his deputy; from now on, he will be Hapless, and nobody must know what occurred. The scene is shot and cut with such rough-breathing panache that you can taste the wet mist at the back of your throat and feel your shoes clipping and sliding, like Dormer's, on the hard, ringing rocks underfoot. Later, he pursues the same suspect across a waterborne jam of logs—half bridge, half rolling road—and has the misfortune to fall between the cracks, which promptly close above him as he fights for air. Anyone who suffers from drowning dreams should probably stay clear of this movie.



Al Pacino plays Will Dormer, a Los Angeles cop trying to get some sleep.

TOM BACHTELL

The director, Christopher Nolan, showed his hand to dazzling effect in "Memento," and his sense of location, of places beaten up by a wrecking crew of desperate or disappointed humans, has not deserted him. The trouble is that his skills are now applied to a tale that can scarcely bear the pressure of his sophistication. The editing is so pathologically busy, and the mania for pace so instinctive, that not until halfway through do you realize that, beneath the fuss, the narrative is suffering from chronic plod. If the chase sequences seem headlong, that is because the character studies are standing perilously still. We are well into the film before the prime suspect shows his face, whereupon the face turns out to belong to Robin Williams. For those of you bracing yourselves for "Patch Adams Goes North," have no fear. Williams plays a pulp novelist called Walter Finch, whose fans included the murder victim. He toys with Dormer over the phone, and, as Williams twitters on, you sense the audience tensing for comic payoffs that never come. That is the hitch with career rethinks: the funnyman decides to go nasty, but there hangs around him a buzz and crackle of the old ways, and his admirers keep having to retune, uncertain what signal they should be listening for.

In "Insomnia," the crunch comes as the hero and his opposite number hook up on a ferry, to discuss what each of them knows about the other. This should be Nolan's big moment, his answer to that quiet, magnificent interlude in Michael Mann's "Heat," when Pacino met De Niro in a coffee shop. All the suspicion and threat in that movie were brewed down, drop by drop, into polite conversation, as if each of the men were too shy to mention the name Corleone. But Williams and Pacino just don't mesh. Pacino's mind is elsewhere, and Williams has the quick-smiling jumpiness of a man not with a noisome secret to hide but with a fresh halibut down his pants. Neither is helped by Hillary Seitz's script, which turns what should be a private war game into therapy for two: "Feels good to talk about this stuff," Finch says.

Nobody could mistake the breeze of sadness blowing through this film; witness the shots of an old, cold Pacino tramping the streets and finding a dead dog. Yet the real sadness is that the title never gets its due. Nightmute, at this time of year, is the land of the midnight sun, which in Dormer's case means the land of the eternal gum-chewing and the eyes that bulge like Ping-Pong balls. "Having little flashes yet?" Finch asks. Unfortunately, it is from that line that Nolan takes his cue, and his vision of wakefulness is little more than a choppy succession of tossings and turnings; there is no grasp of the aching elasticity of time that plagues the perpetual non-sleeper, the dread that every evening will herald a terrible epic. We are left, once again, to muse on the rich, half-explored territory of this inspiring affliction. After all, what are moviegoers if not paying insomniacs, sitting and staring doomily into the dark?

The principle that drives "Late Marriage" is that expectations, wherever they come from, exist to be confounded. For instance, shortly before I saw the film somebody described it to me as "an Israeli comedy." That seems unlikely, these days. But the film, directed by Dover Kosashvili, was made more than a year ago, and it performs the indispensable function of reminding us that there have been, and will again be, periods in Israel's history when the matter that weighs most heavily on a handsome man in his early thirties is not whether he can walk the streets without fear of bombs but whether he should meet a girl—his future wife, perhaps—while wearing a scandalous yellow shirt.

Zaza (Lior Ashkenazi), a graduate student in philosophy, is a wellspring of shame to his parents, who crave a suitable bride for him. In the opening scenes, we see them corralling him into the garish sitting room of a family as hopeful as they are. (The situation, with its airs and grievances, is at least as old as Molière.) Again the movie swings a surprise: Zaza's intended is younger than he is but twice as knowing, with a bedroom like Barbie's and a little sister hiding under the bed. Zaza politely disdains her, and soon we find out why; under darkness, he heads back to his semi-secret girlfriend, Judith (Ronit Elkabetz)—a divorced mother, with a child named Madonna. As his parents would say: Can it get any worse?

For Zaza, of course, it could hardly be better. Few pleasures are as delectable as those which mock the pleasureless rulings of the clan. The most fruitful twist in "Late Marriage" is that at its core lies not a snippy domestic farce but a prolonged, dirty, and wholly credible sex scene, which starts and stops and starts again, and in which argument and arousal are entwined like limbs. There is even a walk-on, or wipe-off, role for paper tissues, which is something you *never* see on film. Even after that, the shocks reverberate, for though we know for certain what makes this man and woman happy, society is not yet done with them, and his parents invade the lovers' apartment on a mission to halt the joy. Complications abound, and Kosashvili ends his taut, remarkable work on a note more of embattled resignation than of peace. Maybe thoughts of strife were not so distant after all. ♦

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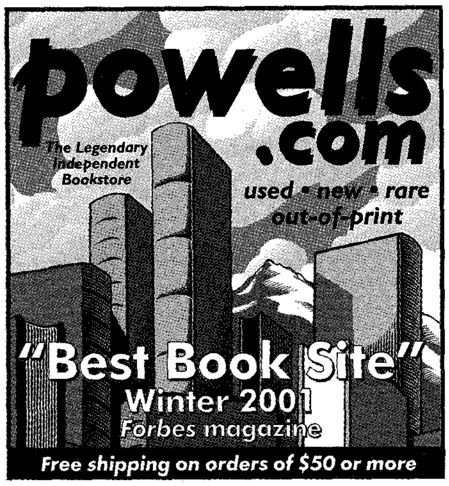

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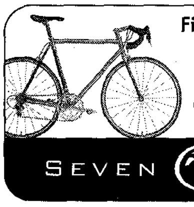

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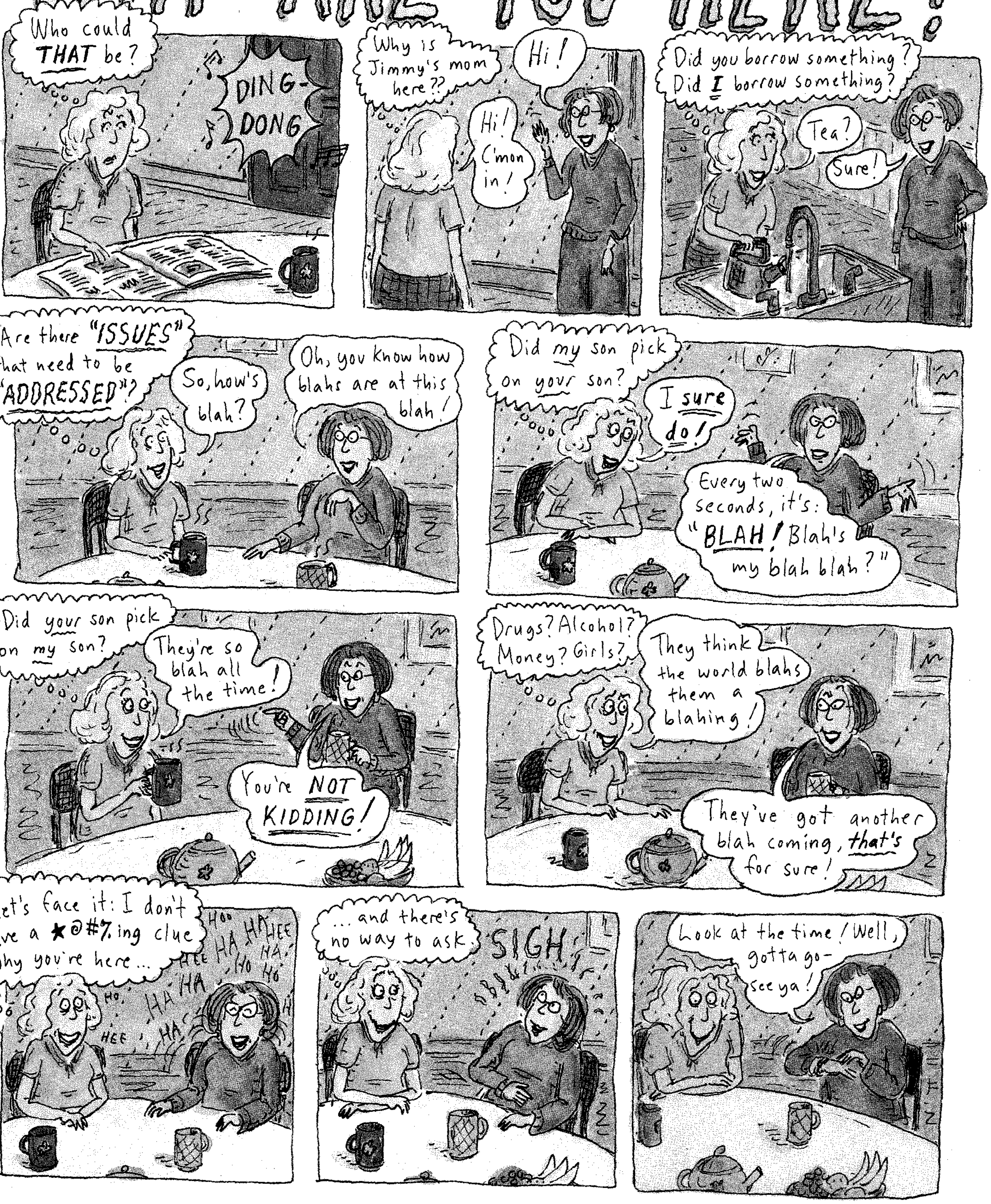
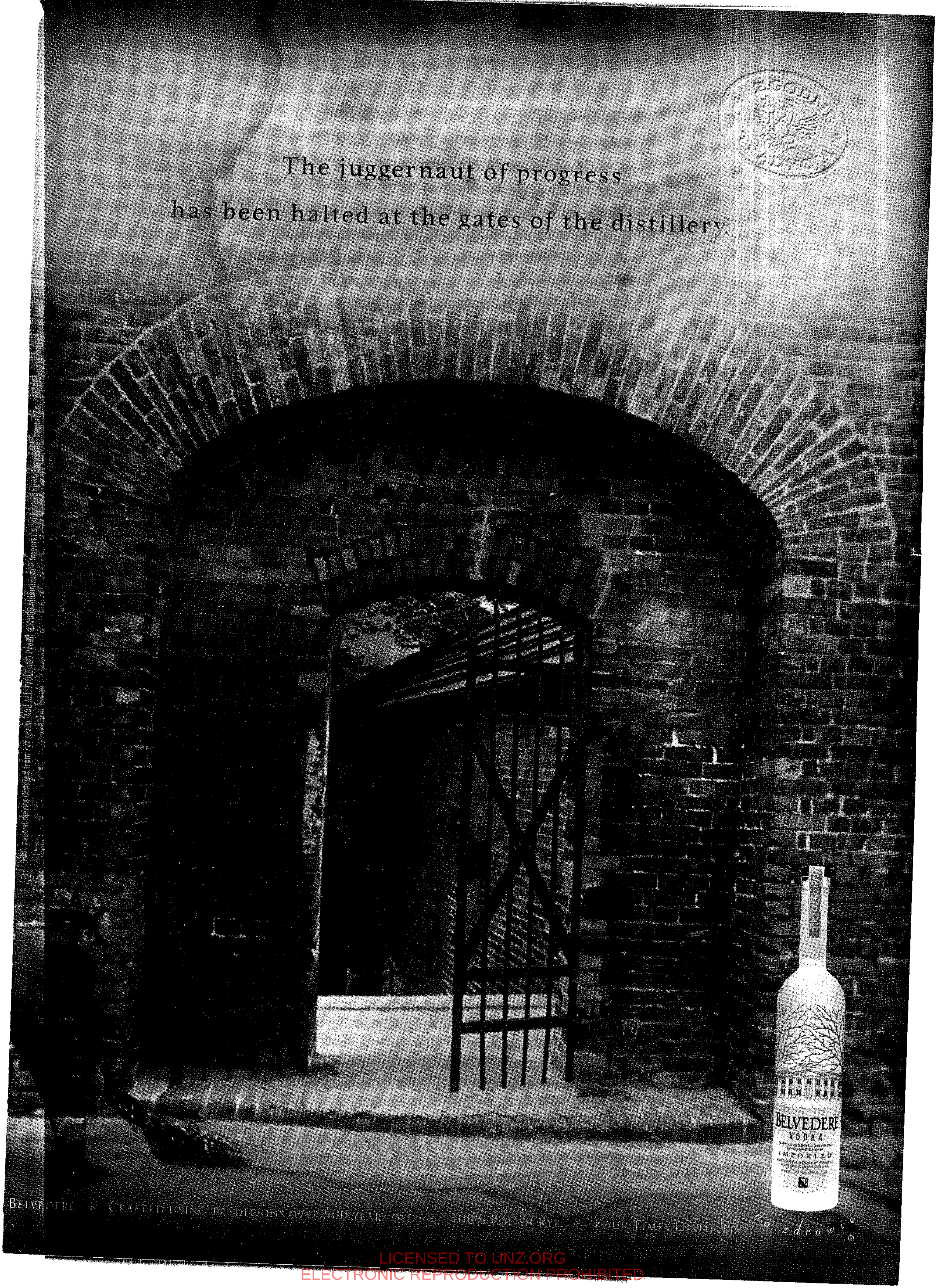
THE BACK PAGE BY ROZ CHAST

WHY ARE YOU HERE?


Who could THAT be?
DING-DONG
Why is Jimmy's mom here??
Hi!
Hi! C'mon in!
Did you borrow something? Did I borrow something?
Tea?
Sure!
Are there "ISSUES" that need to be "ADDRESSED"?
So, how's blah?
Oh, you know how blahs are at this blah!
Did my son pick on your son?
I sure do!
Every two seconds, it's: "BLAH! Blah's my blah blah?"
Did your son pick on my son?
They're so blah all the time!
You're NOT KIDDING!
Drugs? Alcohol? Money? Girls?
They think the world blahs them a blahing!
They've got another blah coming, that's for sure!
Let's face it: I don't have a ★@#%ing clue why you're here...
HO HA HA HA HA HEE HO HA HA HA HEE HA HO HO HEE HA HA HA
... and there's no way to ask.
SIGH
Look at the time! Well, gotta go - see ya!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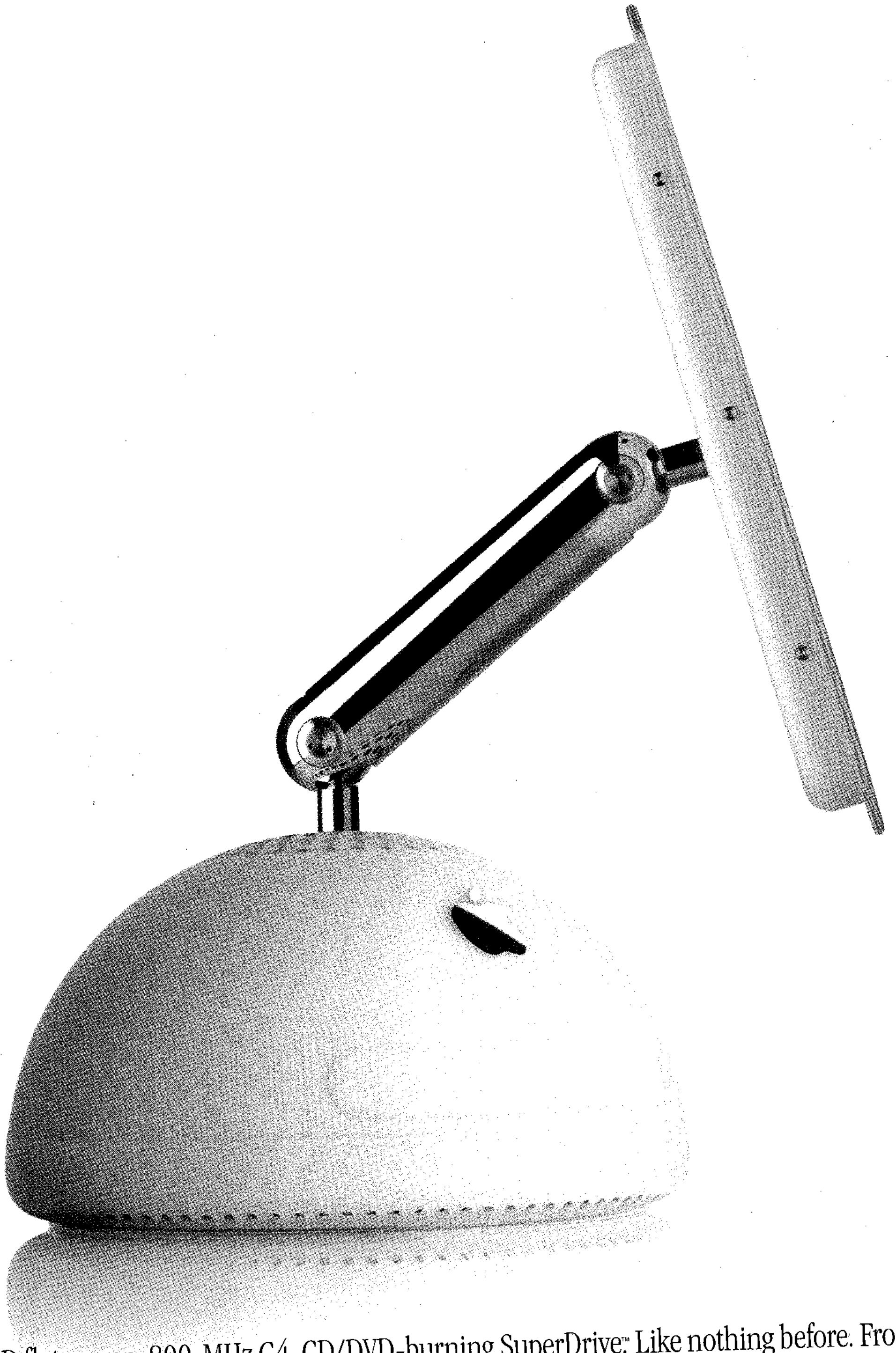

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